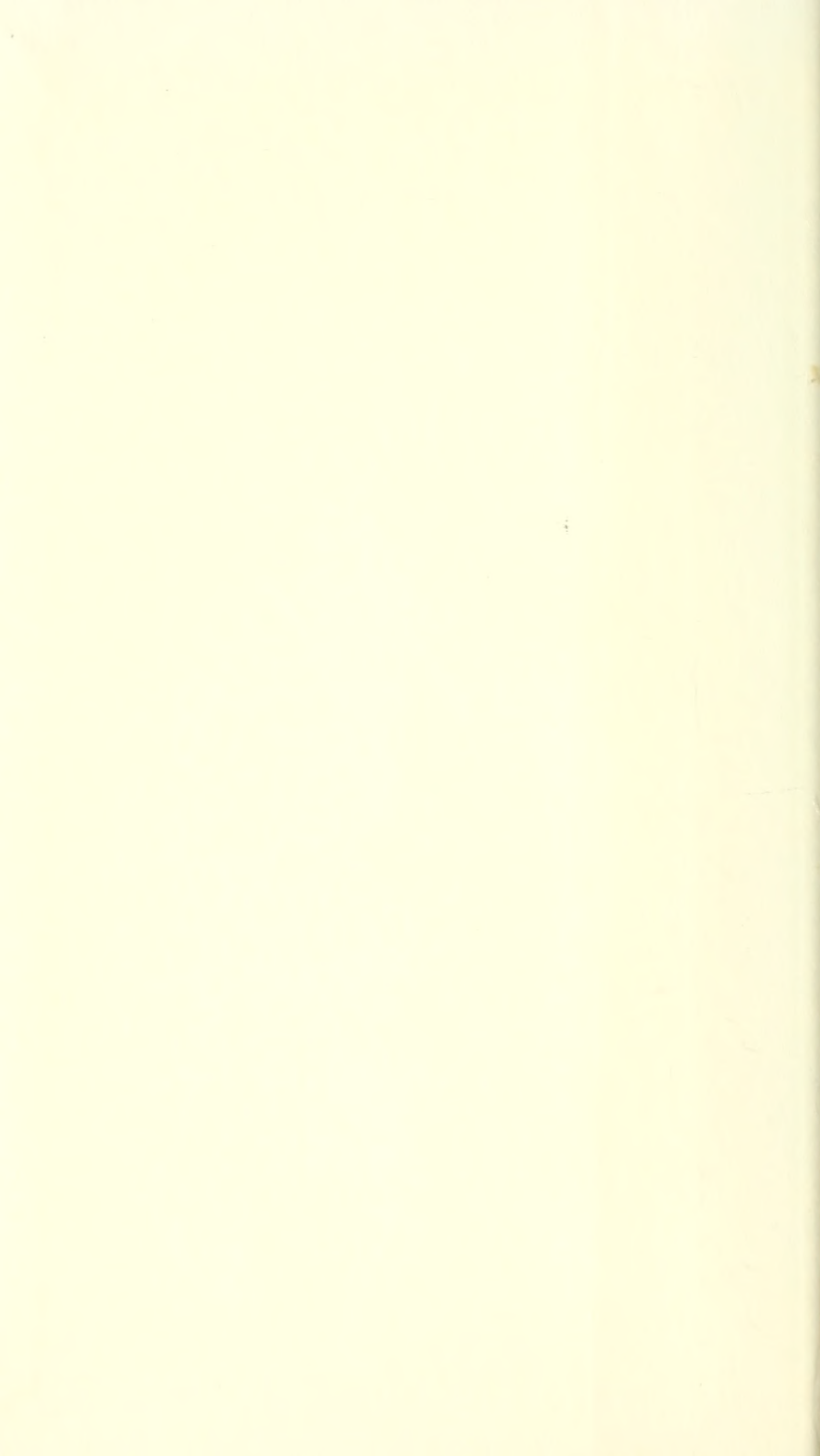


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THE EDINBURGH PERIODICAL PRESS

THE DIVRNAL OCCVRRANCES.

Touching the dailie proceedings in
Parliament, from the 27 of *December*, to
the third of *January*, 1642.

With the Lord Mayor's going to his Majestie about the
rising of the Apprentices concerning Colonel *Lunsford*, who
was thereupon displaced from his Lieutenantship of the
Tower, and Sir *John Biron* placed in his Roome.

As also the sending away of certaine Provision, and
Troupes of Horsemen, for the reliefe of the distressed Protestants
in *Ireland*, with his Majesties Royal sealing of the chief
Commanders that went thither: And a Relation
of an Overthrow the Rebels have lately
received in *Ireland*.

Together with the Uprore and Tumult of the Citizens and
Apprentices of *London*, concerning the Bishops, and that twelve
of them are impended from the High Court of Parliament,
and charged with High Treason: the Bishop of *York*,
and eight more, being committed to the Tower,
the Bishops of *Peterborough* and *Durresme*
to the *Black Red*, and the
Bishop of *Londaffe*
cannot be
found.

Printed at *London*, and re-printed at *Edinburgh*.

Front Page of the First Scottish Periodical.

The
Edinburgh Periodical Press

Being a Bibliographical Account of the
Newspapers, Journals, and Magazines
issued in Edinburgh from the Earliest
Times to 1800

BY

W. J. COUPER, M.A.

VOL. I

INTRODUCTION AND BIBLIOGRAPHY 1642-1711

STIRLING

ENEAS MACKAY, 43 MURRAY PLACE

1908



PN
5139
E2C8

TO
MARGARET SCOTT COUPER
WHO
WITH GRACIOUS FORBEARANCE AND UNFAILING PATIENCE
SUFFERS
HER HUSBAND'S HOBBIES

660317

PREFACE.

PART of what these volumes contain has already appeared in *Scottish Notes and Queries*, and I desire to express my gratitude to the Editor, Mr. John Bulloch, for his ready permission to make what further use I liked of the material.

I can hardly expect that this—the first attempt to give a detailed account of the early Edinburgh newspaper press, indeed, the early newspaper press of Scotland—can be free from the errors, deficiencies, and omissions of pioneer work. It would be strange if many mistakes had not crept into the mass of facts that has been collected, and it would be equally strange if important sources of information had not been overlooked. I am also fully aware of the inadequacy of the introductory sections; but they are offered as a contribution to the elucidation of a subject which one day should have its history fully written.

Considerable difficulty has been experienced in determining what publications should be admitted to rank as periodicals. One encyclopedia defines a periodical thus: "The use of the term is

restricted in ordinary conversation to magazines and reviews appearing not less frequently than once a quarter, and not more frequently than twice a month. Weeklies, at least in Great Britain, have, with a few exceptions, ceased to be regarded as periodicals." To have adopted this as a working definition would have reduced the volumes to a very small bulk. In its widest sense, any book or paper, sent out in parts at intervals, had a claim to be counted periodical. But it would have been absurd to have included such prints as the "Votes" of the Convention of Estates which the King's Printer published during the sittings of Parliament, or works like Calder's "Miscellaneous Numbers" (which the British Museum Library catalogues under "Periodicals"), Johnston's "Musical Museum," or the "Vocal Magazine" of 1797. All such publications were set aside. Almanacs, too, had a certain right of admission, but they were also excluded for what appears an adequate reason. The working definition under which selection was made was that which the ubiquitous and discerning "man in the street" has in his mind when he thinks of a periodical publication. Ventures which never proceeded beyond the first number

have been included on the ground that real periodicity was denied them much against their best intentions.

As to the method employed in the book, this only needs to be said: so far as it is possible, each periodical has been made to stand alone, and its history has been followed out to the close. The only exception to this arrangement is made in the case of the *Edinburgh Gazette*, which, under varying titles, and with numerous re-starts, flourished, if the word can fitly be used, from 1699 to 1715. To have attempted one long consecutive narrative would have produced confusion in the mind of the reader. Simplicity was made easier by treating each beginning as if it were a new paper. The complete narrative can be read at once by using the references at the close of each section. It was also thought advisable to continue to the end the history of any paper which survived 1800. This was done in the hope that the periodicals which started publication after that date would provide material for future volumes. The series would then present a complete view of the Edinburgh press on a definite plan.

During the Commonwealth, certain journals

were published at Leith. These have been included, so that the whole beginnings of the Scottish periodical press might come under review.

Little or no notice has been taken of errors and blunders in other accounts. Their name is legion. Perhaps no department of Scottish historical enquiry would show more wholesale inaccuracies, and a freer unverified acceptance by writers of the statements of their predecessors.

The date 1800 was not chosen altogether arbitrarily as the *terminus ad quem*. In some respects the beginning of the nineteenth century was a transition period. Within a year or two of its start the press made advances and new departures, which mark the date 1800 as one at which a division can legitimately be made.

It is impossible to enumerate here all the sources from which help has been got. The foot-notes indicate the books that have been found most useful. Wherever files were available they have been examined: the tables of contents indicate those papers specimens of which could not be discovered. Special mention should be made of the series of articles which my late friend, Mr. J. W. Scott, contributed to *Scottish*

Notes and Queries during 1891-2. The brochure entitled, "Edinburgh Newspapers," by Mr. William Norrie, of Earlston, proved useful. Thanks are due to the Librarians of the following libraries, among others, for the ready permission granted to examine books:—Advocates', Signet, New College, and Public, Edinburgh; Mitchell, Glasgow; Bodleian and Worcester College, Oxford; and the British Museum. The last afforded me special facilities for seeing the newspapers stored in their Repository at Hendon. Indebtedness is gratefully acknowledged to the Earl of Crawford through his Lordship's Librarian, Mr. A. G. E. Phillips, for allowing me to examine some rare periodicals at Haigh Hall, and to take the photographs from which the illustrations have been prepared; to Mr. H. G. Aldis, whose private letters and "Handlist of Books published before 1700" have been very helpful; and, among many others who aided me with the sight of books, to Mr. William Cowan, who placed his collection of Edinburgh periodicals at my disposal. The Town Clerk of Edinburgh freely granted me access to the Council Minutes. Many correspondents courteously answered my enquiries. My colleague,

the Rev. E. H. Fraser, M.A., read the proofs with me. I am under great obligations also to my friend, Rev. Walter Scott, M.A., to whose suggestion the undertaking of these volumes is due, and to whose interest in them, and labours over them, their ultimate appearance must be attributed.

Very sincerely yours

W. J. Couper



SYMINGTON,
DENNISTOUN, GLASGOW,
April, 1908.

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F	United Free College, Aberdeen.
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M	Mitchell, Glasgow.
N	New College, Edinburgh.
O	Bodleian, Oxford.
S	Signet, Edinburgh.
St.	Stirling, Glasgow.
U	University, Edinburgh.
W	Worcester College, Oxford.
P	Privately-owned copy.

Where several libraries possess copies, the most accessible is, as a rule, named. The file may not necessarily be complete at any library or at all of them. When several initials follow a name in the Table of Contents, the file *may* nearly be complete between them. If no initial is attached, no copy has been examined.

I.

INTRODUCTION.

INTRODUCTION.

I.—THE SCOTTISH FLEET STREET.

THERE is perhaps no more interesting street in Europe than the grim and colourless range of houses that stretch almost in a straight line, from the Castle of Edinburgh on the west down to Holyrood Palace on the east. For centuries it has been the focus of Scottish national life, and hardly a yard of its "royal mile" is without its story of romance and war. The high and crow-stepped buildings that flank it on either side and pour over the slopes of the ridge on which it runs, have housed the best blood of the land, and on its cobbled pavements, and in its tortuous closes, events have been transacted that have moulded the nation's history.

Not least among these associations of the past are the memories of book-making and printing. It is true that the first Scottish printer had his workshop in the parallel line of the Cowgate, but he lived in the High Street, and all his immediate successors in the craft—Thomas Davidson, Robert Lepreuik, Thomas Bassandyne, Robert Smith, Thomas Finlaison, Andro Hart, and Henry Charteris—had their dwelling-house,

their printing establishment, or their sale booth, or perhaps all of them, upon its line.* During the next two centuries, their example was closely followed by their successors in office. Occasional printers did find accommodation in such places as the Grassmarket, but they proved exceptions to the general rule. It was only with an expanding city that the craft broke bounds in the second half of the eighteenth century, and members of it set up presses for themselves elsewhere. But even with much migration the old district has not yet lost its character, and there is still a sufficiency of printing houses, publishing offices, and editorial sanctums within it to maintain the ancient glory and carry forward the ancient tradition.

The printing establishments being thus mainly in the central area, the city newspapers and journals naturally came from the same quarter. Papers printed beyond it were few in number, and as a rule unimportant in quality. The quiet neighbourhood of Holyrood twice heard the clank of a printing press. James VII. thought he could aid his cause in Scotland if he produced within it literature favourable to himself. He accordingly gave royal warrant to

* Dickson and Edmond's "Annals of Scottish Printing" *passim*.

James Watson, senr., and after him to Peter Bruce, to establish their presses within the precincts of the Palace itself.* Among other publications, Bruce sent out, in May, 1688, reprints of several of the London party periodicals.† Again, a century later, the versatile and eccentric James Tytler made use of the security of the debtors' sanctuary round the Palace, and his enforced leisure therein, to issue the magazine-products of his home-made press. More than once the Cowgate became a place of publication for periodicals. In the opening years of the eighteenth century Andrew Symson, rabbled curate, poet and printer, published a few ephemeral news-sheets from his printing-house "at the foot of the Horse Wynd" there; and from probably the same house Margaret Reid, in her sore distress, sent out one or two numbers of her *Edinburgh Gazette* in 1715. Farther to the west "opposite Forrester's Wynd, Cowgate," James Murray issued his *North British Magazine*, to run its short course of just over a year. Still further

* The exact situation of the press is given in a letter from the King to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury—"in the outer Court of our Palace of Holyroodhouse."—William Cowan's "Holyrood Press" (Edinburgh Bibliographical Society's publications), p. 6.

† Ibid.

removed from the central area was the press located in the College at the Kirk o' Field. It is possible that the Andersons, printers both to the King and to the University, may have used it to reprint several of the London periodicals for which they were responsible about 1690. It is also probable that it was from this press that they issued their numbers of the *Edinburgh Courant* of 1705, as well as the Scottish edition of Defoe's famous *Review*, which Mrs. Anderson had in hand during 1709-10. The firm of Hamilton, Balfour & Neil became printers to the University in 1754, and, as a short history of the firm puts it, they planted their press "in the very centre of intellectual Edinburgh—its famous University."* It was only when the premises that housed the press were required for an extension in 1769 that the firm removed to the Old Fish-market Close. While in the College they sent out the *Edinburgh Chronicle* of 1759, some of the numbers bearing that it was sold there. The ambitious *Edinburgh Review* of 1755 makes no acknowledgment of the location of the press that printed it, but it is satisfactory to know that it appropriately first saw the light within the learned bounds of the College. But these are nearly all the periodicals that were given to the

* "History of Neil & Co., Printers," p. 5.

public from outside of the High Street area for the first century and a half of their existence. When their mass is compared with that of the journals printed within, nothing is detracted from the general statement that the centre of the city was also the centre of its newspaper production.

Before modern streets were driven across it, the High Street was continuous throughout its whole length, with the exception of the break caused by the West Bow, near its western extremity. The long way, however, was cut up into sections by certain obstructions which stood on the crown of the thoroughfare. They divided the street into the Castlehill, the Lawnmarket, the High Street proper, and the Canongate. So far as is known, no periodical can be credited to the Canongate section, and the Castlehill is associated with the name of one only. Donaldson's printing house, where for many years from its start, the *Edinburgh Advertiser* was printed and published, stood on the south side of the hill. The windows overlooked the depression of the Grassmarket, and were full in view of the stately pile of buildings erected through the piety of George Heriot for the poor scholars of Edinburgh. The suggestion has not been wanting that it was the sight of these buildings week after week that led James

Donaldson to make his princely benefaction for the afflicted children of the city.

The booths of the cloth merchants gave its name to the Lawnmarket. Chambers tells how a set of the club which the merchants formed "met every morning about seven o'clock and walked down to the Post Office, where they made themselves acquainted with the news of the morning. . . . On Wednesday mornings, when there was no post from London, it was their wont to meet as usual, and in the absence of real news amuse themselves by the invention of what was imaginary; and this they made it their business to circulate among their uninitiated acquaintances in the course of the forenoon. Any such unfounded articles of intelligence, on being suspected or discovered, were usually called 'Lawnmarket Gazettes,' in allusion to their roguish originators."*

But the Lawnmarket produced several journals which fully deserved the title on its sober side. Morocco's Close, which led to the north, for many years contained the famous printing-house of Thomas Ruddiman, the grammarian. One of his imprints gives its situation exactly: it is described as being in "Morocco's Close on the fourth story of the turn-

* "Traditions of Edinburgh," p. 173.

pike, near the foot thereof opposite to the head of Liberton's Wynd." There was published the *Caledonian Mercury* after its first 589 numbers had been issued from Carrubber's Close further down the same side of the street, and from it, it appeared regularly as long as the paper remained the property of the Ruddimans. The publication brought anxiety and trouble to its learned printer when the city was occupied by the Pretender in 1745. Chalmers acknowledges that Ruddiman may have been forced to act as the Prince's printer "while his power was irresistible at Edinburgh, and while a sergeant and a guard surrounded the printing-house,"* but vehemently denies that he sympathised with the insurgents. The Government of the day were evidently of a different opinion, for they kept a close watch upon the *Mercury*, and Ruddiman's only son fell a victim to the suspicions that had been aroused. Cahnier times, however, prevailed, and when Ruddiman's nephew launched the first *Edinburgh Magazine* it was from Morocco's Close that it started on its career. At a still later period William Auld set up his press in the same close, and from it probably came the earlier *Weekly Journal*.

On the south side of the Lawnmarket four

* "Life of Thomas Ruddiman," p. 207.

closes ran off which had journalistic activities. Brodie's Close preserves the memory of the notorious Deacon of that name. For several years before he expiated his crimes on the scaffold he lived alongside of the office of Mennons & Co., a firm of printers which published several magazines and at least one newspaper, the *Edinburgh Evening Post*. They used the encyclopedic abilities of James Tytler, and made several attempts to evade the vigilance of those who administered the Stamp Acts, only to find the authorities too strong for them. Of the other three closes, only a fragment of Liberton's Wynd now survives the improvements effected when George IV. Bridge was constructed. It was one of "the chief thoroughfares from the fashionable district of the Cowgate to the High Town," and within it Henry Mackenzie, whose name is permanently associated with his *Mirror* and *Lounger*, was born in 1745. During the greater part of the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the Wynd housed the printing press of John Reid, junior. It was the time of swift changes in the printers of any paper, and most of the newspapers of the day fell into Reid's hands at one time or another. In this way numbers of the first *Edinburgh Gazette* under its various titles and disguises, the first *Edinburgh Courant*, its successor the *Scots Courant*, and the

Observer, were published from Liberton's Wynd. Reid's productions show a varying skill in the exercise of his craft. Some of his prints are produced on miserable paper with miserable type.

Running parallel with Liberton's Wynd, and immediately below it, was Forrester's Wynd. Connecting the two was an alley in which was placed Lucky Dunbar's Tavern, one of the howffs of the "Mirror men," where they met and discussed the coming contents of their journal. When Captain Donaldson's *Edinburgh Gazette* started upon its last effort for life in 1714 its production was entrusted to Robert Brown, whose establishment lay within the wynd itself. From that day its narrow roadway often saw magazines and newspapers carried hot from the press to the outer world. In 1762 Walter Ruddiman removed his establishment across the street into it, and there in 1768 he published the first Scottish weekly magazine, as well as the newspaper that grew out of it. The periodical attracted much attention from the writers of the day, and Poet Fergusson often crept down the dingy lane to drop his manuscripts into Ruddiman's contributors' box. At the mouth of the wynd stood the printing-house of Peter Williamson, who facetiously described himself as "from the other world;" and there he set up

his two *Scots Spys*. In the last decade of the century several journals were produced within it—the *Edinburgh Herald* and the *Scottish Register* among others. In the days of its decrepitude the *Scots Magazine* emerged tottering from its recesses, and the second *Weekly Journal* for many years had its office within the wynd.

Still further down the street was Turk's Close, in which, about 1773, William Auld's printing establishment was to be found, and from which he published at least two short-lived magazines—the *Gentleman and Lady's Weekly Journal* and the *North British Intelligencer*.

The group of buildings that surround St. Giles' was the very heart of the city, and in them several important periodicals were printed or had their place of sale. Built in the thoroughfare to the north of the Cathedral, and reducing the main street to a dark and narrow lane, were the Luckenbooths. At the end of this building, as it faced down the street and looked over the intervening tenements to the open North Sea beyond, was the flat in which, from 1726, Allan Ramsay housed his circulating library. From him the books descended to James McEuen, whose name is associated with the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, both as original proprietor and one of its first publishers,

although the paper itself would seem to have been printed at its start on the opposite side of the High Street in Pearson's Close. Kincaid too, who became first colleague and then successor to McEuen, maintained his chief's connection with the paper.

But perhaps the "land" became most widely known throughout the city through William Creech, who in 1773 assumed the sole control of the business in succession to Kincaid. Under his sway it became the gathering place of the literati of the Capital, and it was on his counters that the *Mirror* and *Lounger* first met the eyes of the delighted citizens. Mackenzie has himself, perhaps with a mixture of literary imagination, described the reception of the *Mirror's* first number. He found Creech, the publisher, had done much to attract attention to the sheet—"he had taken care to have several copies lying open upon the table, besides the conspicuous appearance of the subscription-paper hung up fronting the door, with the word *Mirror* a-top, printed in large capitals."* Did the names of the contributors, we wonder, appear as subscribers to their own journal? Even although Mackenzie's account is altogether fictitious, an

* *Mirror*, No. 2.

interesting glimpse is given of the interior of an Edinburgh bookseller and publisher's shop.

The shop of James Watson, of whom more anon, was situated in the narrow lane left by the Luckenbooths between them and the northern line of houses. It must have been well known in the early part of the eighteenth century, for its designation, "next door to the Red Lyon," appeared on many a periodical. In the same passage was the printing-house of Patrick Mathie, who, in 1740, published the *Patriot*, an organ that had no Jacobite tendencies. Debouching on to the same lane was the Advocate's Close, which contained the premises of Martin & Wotherspoon, who were responsible for the *Edinburgh Museum* of 1763 and the *Edinburgh Repository* of 1774.

The buildings on the south side of the Cathedral were chiefly associated with the law—either in its making or in its administration. The main approach lay through "a small oblong square," as Lockhart describes it, which was named the Parliament Close. This was the site of much of the Edinburgh book trade from the last quarter of the seventeenth century and onwards. A list of a dozen names can be given of those who engaged in bookselling in the neighbourhood before 1700. Some of these took an interest in the disposal of periodical literature.

Thus Alexander Ogston had his name on the *Bibliotheca Universalis* of 1688 as selling it, and his widow, who succeeded to the business, was similarly concerned with the *Present State* of 1690. Freebairn, who was involved in the struggle for the office of King's Printer in 1711, had his shop in the same place, and his name appears in the imprint as selling the *Paris Gazette* of 1706. The opening numbers of the *Caledonian Mercury* were sold in the close at a shop whose sign was appropriately a "Printing-*presse*." When Peter Williamson compiled his "Edinburgh Directory" for 1773-4, eight book-sellers and stationers and one printer were found to be established in the quarter. Chief perhaps among the shops was that of James Sibbald, who had fallen heir to Allan Ramsay's Circulating Library. His premises became a kind of literary resort, as we learn from Sir Walter Scott among others, and here was published the *Edinburgh Magazine* from its start in 1785 till the close of the century. In the "back stairs" stood the printing establishment of the Robertsons, who, from 1772 to 1790, were the proprietors and printers of the *Caledonian Mercury*.* From the

* For breaking into this office, and stealing some cash and candles, a wretched burglar suffered the extreme penalty of the law, in the Grassmarket, May 21, 1783.

same office came its short-lived contemporaries, the *Caledonian Gazetteer* and the *Edinburgh Gazette* of 1780. Dr. Anderson's *Bee* was produced by Mundell & Son, whose works were on these same Parliament stairs. Before the century closed they had removed to the foot of the Royal Bank Close in the same quarter, and from there they sent out the *Gleaner*. For a time the *Government Gazette* had its office of publication in the district, but it and all the other establishments were swept away in the great fire of 1824, although the *Gazette* is now again established in an office near the site of its first publication.

The closes running off the High Street between St. Giles and the Netherbow were on the whole the most active in periodical publication. It was a congested area, having on the main street certain public erections that served as rallying points for the citizens—The Cross, the Guard House and the Tron. The Cross was a favourite lounge for the "caddies," part of whose business was the selling of the public prints. All three were used to locate shops and printing-houses. Thus William Johnston's bookselling place was described as being "over against the Court of Guards." The shop of Mrs. Anderson, the printing monopolist, and Craig's Close, where James Watson had his office, were "on the north side of the Cross," just as the premises of

Christopher Higgins and John Moncur are not located simply by the close in which they could be found, but have the additional direction that they are "opposite to the Tron."

On the north side of the street was Anchor Close, along with Pearson's, Craig's, Hart's, Bull's, and Carrubber's Closes. The cutting through of Cockburn Street and the North Bridge has greatly altered the district, but enough remains to indicate the appearance of these wynds. Anchor Close, which still stands, has memories of Burns and of the famous Crochallan Club, and was besides the site of the printing establishment of William Smellie, whence issued the snarling *Edinburgh Magazine and Review* in 1773. Hart's Close is perhaps most worthy of remembrance, though the building of Cockburn Street and the North Bridge long ago destroyed its existence. In it stood for several years the printing office of Christopher Higgins, who after all best deserves the credit of the pioneer news printer for Scotland. In later years it also contained the works of John Mosman, one of the original projectors of the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* of 1718, and probably printer of its opening numbers.

Craig's Close had a long connection with the press of the city. The dwelling house of Andro Hart stood at its head, and his printing house

can still be seen further down the close. Years afterwards the former became successively the home of Provost Creech and of Archibald Constable, the latter of whom made it both his dwelling house and his publishing offices. Down the close was the printing establishment of Bailie Willison, Constable's father-in-law, in a dingy back room of which Jeffrey and his fellow-writers surreptitiously corrected the proofs of their *Edinburgh Review*. No. 1 was issued from Constable's house. But these last were only carrying on a tradition begun by James Watson, the printing of whose numerous publications was done within the close. All kinds of periodicals fell within his interest, and he was probably the most energetic news-provider of the two centuries in which he lived. At various times he printed newspapers like the *Edinburgh Gazette* of 1699, the *Edinburgh Courant* of 1705, and the *Scots Courant*; reprinted papers like the *Paris Gazette*, Addison's *Examiner*, and Steele's *Tatler*; issued an original essay-journal like the *Tatler* of 1711, and republished a review like the *History of the Works of the Learned*. Altogether his name appears on the imprint of nearly a dozen different ventures—all which activity he combined with a real desire for the advancement of his craft as printers. At the foot of the same close was the office of W. Cheyne, who was

responsible for the *Thistle* of 1734, and a collection of periodical essays in the fashion of the time. The firm of Murray & Cochran, printers, who joined with Sands, the bookseller, to establish the *Scots Magazine*, had their printing establishment for a time in the same alley, and as late as the last decade of the century the venerable journal was being produced by them there.

Of the remaining closes on the north side of the High Street, Bull's Close contained the press of John Moncur, whose name occurs on several of the newspapers published between 1700 and 1715. He seems to have been a friendly man, and to have relieved his confreres Watson and Reid, senior, when they were hard pressed. He also had his part in producing several of the current papers on his own account, notably Defoe's *Courant* of 1710. Carrubber's Close, on the east side of the present North Bridge, was the spot whence William Rolland sent out the first number of the *Caledonian Mercury*. Hart's Close was where Christopher Higgins set up his press when he removed from Leith about 1654, and where he produced several journals. Pearson's Close led from the High Street almost opposite the Cross. Here John Reid, probably he of Liberton's Wynd, produced some numbers of the *Edinburgh Gazette* in 1714. For many years

also the *Evening Courant* first saw the light there in the premises of Robert Fleming, who in the recesses of the close braved the anger of the victorious Pretender in the autumn of 1745. From the same press issued the *Reveur*, that essay-periodical that aroused the admiration of at least one writer.

On the south side of the street several closes had printing offices on their steep declivities. Near the Netherbow was the house of the fire-brand *Scots Chronicle* of 1797. Its main entrance was in Murdoch's Close, but it also opened on the adjoining Todrick's Wynd. In Burnet's Close, above the Tron, the first volumes of the *Scots Magazine* were printed at the house of Murray & Cochran. The "Lyon in Mourning" tells how "about the beginning of July, 1746, one Garnet, a dragoon in Lord Mark Ker's regiment, and son to one Garnet, a printer in Sheffield,"* came to the office to lodge information regarding the cruelties practised after Culloden. Bell's Wynd is found frequently in the imprints of John Reid, senior, who died in 1712. He printed the *Edinburgh Gazette* when its proprietor quarrelled with Watson, and for some time had a chief part in the newspaper production of his day.

* I., 250 (Scot. Hist. Soc.).

An alley that had a long and honourable association with the periodical press was the Old Fishmarket Close, whose mouth opened almost on the Cross. Stewart's Oyster House within it was one of the haunts of the "Mirror men;" and for many years the English mails drew up in the High Street opposite to it, for it contained the "Post House" for half-a-century after 1708. Every newspaper proprietor in the city would have his representative hanging about the close waiting the arrival of the coach, and as soon as he had secured his quota of the English papers, he would dart away to his own place with his prize. When Hamilton, Balfour & Neil left the College, they settled in the old close. Fleming & Ramsay removed into it from Pearson's Close, and for at least half a century the *Courant* found its settlement there. The office was completely destroyed in the disastrous fire of 1824. Only one house was left standing unharmed in the close—that of Manners & Moodie, booksellers—and that firm generously placed their premises at the disposal of the burnt-out newspaper for purposes of publication. The paper itself was for the time being printed at the office of Ballantyne's *Weekly Journal*. All the time that the *Caledonian Mercury* was in the hands of Robert Allan, it was published in the Old Fishmarket Close, and when Sibbald

started the *Herald* in 1790, he had it printed for him for nearly a year in the office of Stewart, Ruthven & Co. in the same wynd. Kincaid, the King's Printer, had his premises within it, and in all probability, therefore, the *Mirror* and the *Lounger* first emerged into the world from under the "Salamander Land," through which entrance was found into the close.

On the whole the record of the High Street during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was an honourable one. Perhaps the street itself came more into evidence during the first half of the following century, when many imprints bore that the periodicals carrying them were published at such a number, High Street. Of ten newspapers issued in 1833, half appeared from a High Street office. But even at the earlier period the High Street was really the centre of the newspaper activity of Edinburgh. It was along its pavements that messengers and caddies alike found their way with copies to the public, and the coaches that carried them to distant parts of Scotland had first to rattle down its causeway. Contributors had to find their way largely through it to drop their letters or essays into the box of the periodical they favoured, and printers and proprietors alike had to pass along some part of it in going from their homes to their offices. The High Street may not

have the brilliant record of the Fleet Street of London. It may not be able to point to as crowded an issue of journals, nor to such men of genius as had dealings with the periodical press that appeared in the south. But it has a record of its own. It can point to such pioneers of the press as Donaldson and Watson, who between them did much to give the Scottish capital newspapers of its own, and it can count among the number of its indwellers such journalists as Sydserf, Defoe, Mackenzie, Hailes, Smellie, and Anderson—not, with the exception of Defoe, giants like Steele and Johnson, but still men who did honourable service in the cause of the periodical press. When the nineteenth century was running its course, greater figures, whose names were to reach throughout the country, could be seen on the old street. The eighteenth century prepared for these³ greater days.

II.—EDINBURGH'S PRE-EMINENCE.

THE first known production of the Scottish periodical press appeared in Edinburgh in the opening days of the year 1642,* and for the next three quarters of a century the capital absorbed practically the whole printing activity of the country in this department. Printing presses were indeed at work in Aberdeen and Glasgow during the whole of that period, and at Leith, Campbeltown, and Maybole there had been book-production before the close of the seventeenth century, but with the doubtful exception of Aberdeen, and the real exception of Leith, none of these places contributed anything to the periodical literature of the country. The history of the beginnings of the press in Edinburgh is accordingly the history of the rise and early progress of the newspaper in Scotland.

The doubt about Aberdeen is due to a darkly

* Throughout this work the Scottish system of making the year begin on January 1 has been adopted in dating, even when English periodicals are concerned, unless in *ipsissima verba* quotations from them.

worded minute of the Town Council, dated July 29, 1657. It reads—"The said day the counsell appoints ane weekly diurnall to be sellit for the vse of the inhabitants, and John Forbes, stationer, to furnish the samen weekly and appoints the deane of gild to pay the said John for the samen, wheranent thir presents to be his warrand."* That the appointment of the Council was complied with is duly guaranteed by the entry which appears in the Burgh accounts for 1656-7—"Item, payit be the comptur to John Forbes, stationer, for fyften diurnalls at the Magistrats order, four pounds ten shillings."† There is nothing in these extracts to show that Forbes produced an original publication or even reprinted one compiled elsewhere. Though he was active as a printer a few years later, there is no evidence that he had a press in 1657. The probability is that he was nothing more than the agent the Corporation employed for procuring the papers they wanted. As is shown later, such an official was in the pay of other councils. That he is designated "stationer" seems to lend colour to the supposition.

Leith occupies a different position, for the periodical press of Scotland got its first marked

* "Records of Burgh of Aberdeen, 1643-1747," p. 165.

† Spalding Club "Miscell.," V., 181.

encouragement from the town. No doubt the help it received was temporary and in a measure fortuitous, but the fact remains that the activity of the periodical press in Leith over a number of years compares favourably with any period in the capital during the same century. As it happened, Leith spoke when Edinburgh was silent.

The political exigencies of the time made the seaport a prominent centre during the early days of the Commonwealth. The difficulty which Cromwell had in reducing the Castle of Edinburgh in 1650 evidently made him suspicious of the place as a military post. The situation of Leith suited his tactics better, and he caused it to be heavily fortified. Nor was its strategic position its only commendation in the eyes of the Commonwealth leaders. Commissioner Tucker reported strongly in its favour as a trading centre when compared with Edinburgh. "This place formerly, and so at this time," he wrote, "is indeed a storehouse, not only for her own traders, but also for the merchants of the city of Edinburgh, this being the port thereof. And did not that city, jealous of her own safety, obstruct and impede the growing of this place, it would, from her slave, in a few years become her rival. . . . In time of peace, the situation of this town, and all other circumstances concurring

to the rendering it fit to prove the most eminently mercantile and trading place of the whole nation, would soon invite the inhabitants of that city to descend from their proud hill into the more fruitful plain, to be filled with the fulness and fatness thereof."* Under such influences it is not wonderful that Leith for a time outstrode Edinburgh in certain matters. Tyler, the printer, left the capital for it, and when Higgins came, possibly to take his place, he also naturally settled in the seaport at first. In newspaper production it was perhaps easiest of all to outstrip the city. News-sheets were produced under the sanction of the authorities, and Leith accordingly became for a time the likeliest place for their appearance. To the seaport's credit, accordingly, stand the *Mercurius Scoticus*, 1651, the *Diurnal of Some Passages and Affairs*, 1652, and probably also the earlier numbers of the Scottish reprint of the *Mercurius Politicus*, 1653.

With these exceptions, Edinburgh was from the beginning the only seat of Scottish journalistic enterprise, until Glasgow published the *Glasgow Courant*, No. 1 of which was dated November 11-14, 1715. The venture appears

* Tucker's "Report" (Bannatyne Club), p. 25.

to have come to an end in little more than five months,* and Edinburgh was again without a rival until the *Glasgow Journal* was started, probably about 1741, and the *Aberdeen Journal* in 1748†—which latter is the oldest existing Scottish newspaper. Dundee made two attempts to establish a journal in 1758, but did not seem even to be in the way of success till 1775 when a series of short-lived magazines began to make their appearance.‡ *The Perth Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure* ran for several volumes from 1772, and in 1776 Dumfries started a *Magazine*, which in the following year became the *Dumfries Weekly Journal*, and dropped publication in 1833 only.§ Montrose was represented only by the *Literary Mirror*, which was begun in 1793, and outlived the century.|| The sister town of Arbroath did not join the ranks till 1799, when it sent out the

* Glasgow University possesses sixty-seven bi-weekly numbers.

† "Scottish Notes and Queries," I., 4.

‡ "Scottish Notes and Queries," 1st ser. III., 97 ; 2nd ser. VII., 134, 186.

§ M'Dowall's "History of Dumfries," p. 795.

|| Low's "Bibliography of Montrose Periodical Literature," p. 4.

Arbroath Magazine.* The well-known *Kelso Mail* was started in 1797.

Even when other towns, however, began the publication of periodicals for themselves, the activity of no centre placed Edinburgh's pre-eminence in any jeopardy. Even when they were at their best, the press of Edinburgh was equal to all the presses of the provinces put together, both as to quantity of output and persistency of existence in the periodicals themselves. When the century closed, Edinburgh possessed two newspapers that were each eighty years old and over, another that was approaching forty, a monthly magazine that had survived sixty years, besides several journals that had respectable histories behind them. The only periodical that could compare with them in point of age was the *Aberdeen Journal*, which had fifty-two years of life to its credit. In literary quality and fame in the world of letters, the superiority of the capital was even more marked. The literati of the country had their home within its walls, and numbers of them lent their pens to the service of the passing periodical. The *Mirror* and the *Lounger* made their way side by side with the *Rambler* and the *Guardian*. The

* McBain's "Bibliography of Arbroath," p. 15.

Edinburgh Review of 1755 contained the first efforts of men like Adam Smith and Robertson the historian. Robert Fergusson's poems carried the *Weekly Magazine* over broad Scotland. Wild and savage though it was, Stuart's *Magazine and Review* had its acknowledged excellences, and the *Scots Magazine* in its best days contained work that renders it valuable even now. Lord Hailes' contributions to the *Edinburgh Magazine* helped to establish its fame. No doubt the best times for Edinburgh journalism still lay in the future. The *Edinburgh Review*, *Blackwood*, the *Scotsman*, and a host of other papers that have made the Scottish capital famous over the world, still lay in the womb of time, almost ready to be born when the eighteenth century closed. But for its day and generation the Edinburgh of 1642-1800 had no reason to be ashamed of its performances.

III.—ENGLISH JOURNALS ON SCOTTISH AFFAIRS.

For many years after the Union of the Crowns, the fact best remembered in England about Scotland was that the King had come from it. Before that event the southern nation had all the interest in the northern that one people may have in another with whom they may be precipitated into war at any moment. The intestinal affairs and politics of Scotland might conceivably have importance for the policy of England, and England accordingly kept careful and watchful eyes upon Scotland. But that necessity vanished when James went to London, and the tendency became all the other way. The King did not revisit his native land till thirteen years had passed, and his son Charles required eight years to make up his mind to proceed to Holyrood for his coronation. Neglected in high quarters, it fared no better at the hands of the common people. Writing of events about the year 1638, Lord Clarendon says: "The truth is there was little curiosity either in the court or the country to know anything of Scotland or what was done there, that when the whole nation was solicitous

to know what passed weekly in Germany and Poland and all other parts of Europe, no man ever inquired what was doing in Scotland, nor had that kingdom a place or mention in one page of any gazette, so little the world heard or thought of that people.”*

A different state of affairs emerged when the ecclesiastical riots took place in Edinburgh and throughout the country during 1637. Jenny Geddes’s stool did more than make the signing of the National Covenant possible: it turned the eyes of England towards Scotland in a way they had not been for years. Her own conflict with the King was beginning to loom up heavily in the future, and in view of it what Scotland was doing became of supreme importance. News was needed, and it was not long before means were adopted to let Englishmen know what their neighbours were doing in the north. What intelligence found its way across the Border

* Clarendon’s “History of the Rebellion.” Ed. by Macray. I. 145. More than a century later Hugo Arnot has a similar wail over the indifference of England to Scottish affairs. “It is a strange circumstance,” he says, “that, when we were at London, A.D. 1777, Bath, Bristol, Liverpool, York and other newspapers were to be found in many Coffee Houses; but none from Edinburgh, but in the Edinburgh Coffee House.”—“Hist. of Edinburgh, p. 456.

would necessarily, for the most part, come from Edinburgh.

The following list does not pretend to any completeness, but it will be sufficient to indicate the means used to inform England concerning Scotland and Scottish affairs. It will be noticed that the publications are most numerous when a crisis was pending in the relation of the two countries:—

1642.—*The Scots Scouts Discoveries*, by their London Intelligencer, and presented to the Lords of the Covenant of Scotland, Anno Domini 1639. London: printed 1642. 24 pp., 4to. This publication is usually classed as a periodical, and is therefore included here. It was, however, nothing but a pamphlet. The initials "D. L." appear as the signature of the dedication. Another edition was published in the same year.*

1643.—*The Scotch Mercury*, communicating the Affairs of Scotland and the Northern Parts, and come over to accommodate the late Differences. Number 1. This is licensed and entered according to order. London, printed for Laurence Chapman and Laurence Blaiklock, and are to be sold at their shops at Chancery

* *The Scots Scouts Discoveries* was reprinted in "Phoenix Britannicus." London, 1732.

Lane End and at Temple Bar, Octob. 5, 1643. 8 pp., small 4to. The form the journal took was a conversation between *Mercurius Britannicus* and *Mercurius Aulicus*, two representative papers of the time, with suitable commentaries by the writer. It seems to have had no connection with the next publication, and possibly had its place taken by the *Scottish Dove*.

1643.—*The Scottish Mercury*, relating the Weekly Intelligence from Scotland and the Court. 8 pp., 4to, the last being blank. No printer's name or place of production. The seventh page has "This is licensed and entered according to order—Finis." The British Museum copy has inscribed on it "Autumn of 1643;" the Haigh Hall copy is marked "Probably October 5, 1643."

1643.—*The Scotch Intelligencer*, relating the Weekly Newes from Scotland, the Court and other places. Continued from the 19 to the 25 of October, 1643. This is licensed and entered according to order. No printer or place of publication is given. The signature is B, and the paging 8-16, small 4to. The matter was evidently partly written in Scotland, and the work of the "editor" was to arrange and summarise the news letters that reached him. The date of No. 1 was probably October 12-19, 1643.

1643.—*The Scottish Dove*, Sent out and return-

ing Bringing Intelligence from the Army, and makes some Relations of other observable Passages of Both Kingdoms for Information and Instruction. No. 1 from the 13 of October to the 20 of the same. 8 pp., 4to, weekly. This is licensed and entered into the Hall Book according to Order. London: Printed for Laurence Chapman. 1643.

The cut of a dove did not appear till No. 3. The bird had a scroll in its bill, on which was inscribed, "Holy Innocency is blessed." Beneath the picture was the text, "Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves." No. 5 added to the title, "an antidote against the poisoned insinuations of *Mercurius Aulicus*;" and a later issue still further extended the title by including, "and the errors of intelligencers." The news was not exclusively Scottish, but much was said of the movements of the Scottish army in England. Later numbers had a rhyming table of contents, one of which is given by those who refer to the journal, as the general motto of the paper. The *Scottish Dove* continued to No. 161, November 18-26, 1646, at least.

1644.—*Intelligence from the South Borders of Scotland*. Timperley gives the dates March 18 to May 13, 1644, which would mean eight weekly numbers.

1648.—*Mercurius Calidoniensis*, presenting in a

continued Diurnall (what is rare especially from a State of such serious reservancy and cautious secresie) a true and perfect Relation of all such Speeches, Disputes, Debates, Occurents and Remarkable Passages as have either been delivered, argued, discussed or occasionally occurred since the present Sessions at Edinburgh. Mercurii sine Mercurii genio, sumus omnes; quolibet ex ligno non fiet Mercurius. Printed in the Year 1648. 4to.

The colophon reads—

“Ni pedibus claudis ignoto nomine curram,
In calami testem nomen in orbe feram,
Non vereor titulum : fecit Calidonia vatem ;
Fecit auspicium Terra Britannia meam—
Archibald Hannah.”

Though the print may not be a periodical in the usual sense, it has a certain claim to a place in this list.

1651.—*Mercurius Scoticus*, or the Royal Messenger impartially communicating the Daily Proceedings of the Armies in England, Ireland and Scotland, and other remarkable occurrences from the Parliament's Navy at Sea, Prince Rupert's Fleet in the Straits and the Countess of Derby in the Isle of Man, etc. Examined by the originalls, published by Authority, and

printed by John Clowes for Elizabeth Alkin. Number 2, 8 pp., small 4to, September 23-30, 1651.

1652.—*The Theme or Scoto-Presbyter*, “which,” says Chalmers, “with admirable ridicule enquires ‘whether it be not as little dishonourable for the Scots to be conquered by the English in 1652 as to have been these twelve years past slaves to the Covenant’ ”*—a remark which makes the title very mysterious.

1683.—*Scotch Memoirs* by way of Dialogue between John and Elymas. Printed, Nos. 1 and 2, for William Abbinton, and the subsequent numbers for Richard Butts, at the Bear and Orange Tree in Princes Street. February, 1683.

1689.—*A Speech made by a member of Convention of the States in Scotland.* S.sh. folio. No. 1. London: Printed for Richard Janeway in Queen’s Head Alley in Paternoster Row, MDCLXXXIX. No. 2 had as title “A Continuation of the Proceedings of the Convention of the Estates of Scotland on Monday and Tuesday the 18th and 19th of the instant March, 1689. Liceneed and entred according to Order. London, printed for Richard Chiswell at the Rose and Crown in St. Paul’s Churchyard, MDCLXXXIX.” There was afterwards added to the

* Chalmers’s “Life of Ruddiman,” p. 116.

title, "and of other affairs relating to that Kingdom." At least 122 numbers were published.

1690.—*Plaine Scottish*, or News from Scotland. 4to.

1692.—*The Scottish Mercury*, giving a true Account of the Daily Proceedings and most Remarkable Occurrences in Scotland. No. 1 May 2-8. Printed by R. Baldwin, 1692.*

When Parliament no longer met in Edinburgh, and when the city was regularly producing its own newspapers, there was not so much need for the appearance of English journals devoted to Scottish affairs. Interest was either non-existent or could easily be met by arrangement with some Edinburgh bookseller. The political changes, however, produced a state of matters which has become recurrent ever since they were made possible. Pushing Scots found their way into good places in the south, and produced anger in many an English heart—a complaint that is not unknown even to-day. The situation was hard to bear under George III., and on Tuesday, January 21, 1772, a paper entitled

The Scotchman, Price Twopence-Halfpenny. 6 pp., folio: Printed and published by W.

* *Scottish Journal of Topography*, II., 303.

Moore, No. 32 Chancery Lane, London [O]—was published to display the burden poor England had to carry in suffering so many Scots to govern them. “Read the motley group and blush,” it said to its fellow-countrymen, “Bute, Mansfield, Grafton, Marchmont, Strange, Denbigh, Cathcart, Stormont, Murry, Mitchell, Gordon, Dunmore, Mackenzie (commodore), Mackenzie (James Stuart), Fraser, Elliot, Gilmore, etc., etc. These are our Scotch taskmasters.” And so on the journal stormed through at least twenty-one numbers.

IV.—THE FIRST SCOTTISH PERIODICAL.

IN determining which is the earliest Scottish periodical much depends on the definition of a *Scottish periodical* adopted. If mere printing and publishing settle the question, then there can be no doubt that the earliest known Scottish journal is the *Diurnall Occurrences*, published in January, 1642, by Robert Bryson, an Edinburgh printer. But there was nothing really Scottish about the paper. Its original composition took place in London; any editorial supervision it had was exercised over it in the same place and almost certainly by a native Englishman. Its contents were wholly concerned with English matters and interesting to Englishmen only, except in so far as the proceedings of an English Parliament and the movements of English troops in the then juncture of affairs were of importance to Scotsmen. It was prepared for Englishmen, and made its first appearance among them. The Edinburgh printer did his best to make his reprint reproduce the original as exactly as possible, and succeeded so well that the two editions correspond almost line for line. But these things do not change the nature of the

journal. It became Scottish merely because of a Scottish compositor's composing stick and by passing through an Edinburgh press. Bryson's enterprise was highly commendable, but his periodical was at best only a transplanted alien.

The *Mercurius Scoticus* of 1651 comes nearer to a true native production. It was wholly produced in Scotland, having been edited, printed, published and largely written at Leith. It owed nothing to England except certain excerpts from its journals—an indebtedness in which it was diligently followed by almost every periodical, great and small, that appeared in Edinburgh for the next century and a half. It contained much news concerning events that were happening in Scotland, and told many things which took place in Leith itself. If these matters were alone considered, there could be no doubt about the full right of the *Mercurius* to be held as Scottish as its name, but several facts are against its being accepted as a Scottish periodical through and through. It was probably printed by either Tyler or Higgins, more likely the former, and both of these were Englishmen. It was avowedly published for the information of the English soldiery lying at Leith, and the editor himself speaks as an incomer into the country. He refers to the paper as being "his first-born in Scotland" as if he had been engaged in

journalism before he crossed the Border. The conjecture has been made that he was none other than William Clarke, who came to Scotland in the train of Cromwell, and remained behind him as the secretary of Monk. There is difficulty in believing this, but whoever the editor was, he was an Englishman. The paper was accordingly produced by Englishmen for Englishmen, and in that respect fails in being purely Scottish.

The same objection can be urged against the next two periodicals which appear on the list—*The Diurnall of Some Passages and Affairs* and the *Mercurius Politicus*—as has been stated against the *Diurnall Occurrences*. They are both reprints of London publications. *The Faithfull Intelligencer* and its successor the *Mercurius Britannicus* occupy the same position as the *Mercurius Scoticus*. They are both acknowledged to be written by an officer of the Parliamentary army in Scotland, who as an Englishman addresses Englishmen.

This brings us to the *Mercurius Caledonius*, which has long reigned as the first undoubted Scottish periodical. No objection can lie against the claim on the score of its reputed editor, publishers, or contents. It dealt mainly with Scottish affairs, and its publishers were a combination of Edinburgh booksellers, who named themselves “A Company of Stationers.” What

persons composed the company it is impossible to state, and there appears to be no record of the incorporation of any such society, although their publishing activities showed creditable results. In all likelihood they resembled similar unofficial conjunctions of interested persons as sprang up in later times in the city—as, for example, the group of Edinburgh printers and booksellers who united to produce the *Scots Magazine* in 1738. Nor can there be any doubt about the nationality of the editor, who was certainly Thomas Sydserf. He was a Scotsman born and bred. The *Mercurius Caledonius* has accordingly all the characteristics expected in a Scottish publication, and must be held to be the first of the long list of Scottish journalistic enterprises, until some periodical of earlier date, yet unknown, has been discovered.

Unfortunately little information can be gathered about the career of the first Scottish journalist. His birthplace and birth-date are alike unknown. That he was the son of that Sydserf, who was successively bishop of Galloway and Orkney, is certain, but there is no trace of how he spent his early years. He first appears as serving under the Marquis of Montrose in his campaigns both abroad and in Scotland. For his leader he had to the last the highest respect. In later years he dedicated a book to the son of

his old captain, and there tells how he found his camp "an academy, admirably replenished with discourses of the best and deepest sciences." No doubt Sydserf's royalist convictions were fostered and nourished by his association with Montrose, and the extreme party sentiments which colour the *Mercurius Caledonius* find their origin in it. That he was occasionally employed by Montrose on difficult and dangerous duties is apparent from a rhyme which was published in 1672. Speaking of Sydserf's connection with the Covenanters, it says:—

"Once like a pedlar they have heard thee brag,
How thou didst cheat their sight and save thy crag,
When to the great Montrose, under pretence
Of godly bukes, thou brought'st intelligence."

In 1668 he wrote a tragedy, and in the dedication to George, Marquis of Huntly, he speaks of the debt he owed to that nobleman "for the many reliefs, shelters and protections I received from your family during the time of His Majesty's service in the north of Scotland."*

In spite of his violent partisanship for the House of Stuart, Sydserf was overlooked at the Restoration, and no compensation appears to have been allowed him for the services he had

* Cf. Abbotsford "Miscellany," I., 91.

rendered. It was indeed the other way, for the paper he had started, largely in the interests of the reigning monarch, was summarily suppressed after a few numbers had been issued. The Earl of Dorset once calls him "Sir Thomas," but the title was only an example of poetic license. It says much for Sydserf's loyalty that the pamphlets he published in Edinburgh after the collapse of his journal contain no outbreak upon the ingratitude with which he had been treated. His attacks are reserved for those who had inspired the suppression of his paper.

After the *Mercurius Caledonius* had disappeared he seems to have drifted to London. He had already had his hand in book-making, for in 1658 he had published in London a translation from the French under the title of "Entertainment of the Court or Academical Conversations."* In the following year he issued a second translation, this time of *Cyrano de Bergerac*—under the name of "Σεληναρχια, or the Government of the World in the Moon."† He now tried an original composition, and in 1668 published a play, entitled, "Tarugo's Wiles," an adaptation of a Spanish tragedy. It

* Chambers's "Dom. Annals," II., 271.

† British Museum Catalogue.

was extremely successful, and the Earl of Dorset sang the praises of the author. "Tarugo gave us wonder and delight," he exclaims, and bids Sydserf

"Make all our old men wits, statesmen the young,
And teach e'en Englishmen the English tongue."

He even goes further and represents Phœbus as saying to Scotland—

"On thee I will bestow my longest days
And crown thy sons with everlasting bays.
My beams that reach thee shall employ their powers
To ripen souls and men, not fruits and flowers.
Let warmer climes my fading favours boast
Poets and stars shine brightest in the frost."

Almost immediately after the publication of his play Sydserf moved back to Scotland. A representation of it took place in the "Tennis Court at Holyrood Abbey without the Watergate" in the year of its appearance,* and not many months thereafter we find him established in a playhouse in the Canongate, probably the first permanent theatre that was seen in Edinburgh.

It is in this building, which was both his dwelling house and his theatre, that we get the

* Dibdin's "Annals of the Edinburgh Stage," p. 26.

final glimpse of Sydserf. On June 4, 1669, Mungo Murray, a lieutenant of the city guard,* was put upon his trial for violently breaking into it, and with "a number of his accomplices and assistants, being armed with swords, etc., and other weapons," making a deadly attack upon its occupant. Sydserf was engaged in the rehearsal of a new play, and would have succumbed to the assault had he not been assisted by "the neighbours and good people." As it was, Murray succeeded in pulling off the actor's periwig, while another managed to strike him over the head with a baton. On evidence the lieutenant was found guilty, and was ordained to "crave the said Thomas Sydserf's pardon in face of the Court," and to promise that he would not molest him for the future.†

As Sydserf walks from the Court, he walks out of all knowledge. Even the date of his death has not been ascertained.

* Maitland "Miscellany," III., 154.

† Burnet's "Criminal Law of Scotland," p. 87. Abbotsford "Miscellany," III., 154.

V.—CHRISTOPHER HIGGINS.

IN connection with the origins of the Scottish periodical press, much interest circles round the name of Christopher Higgins. His is the first personality that assumes any definiteness as the printer and publisher of newspapers in the northern Kingdom.

The son of a Buckinghamshire yeoman, Higgins was indentured as an apprentice printer to Mr. John Parker, London, on August 7, 1637, and in due course was made a freeman of the English Company of Stationers on July 4, 1645. He is generally stated to have arrived in Scotland in the year 1652, although nothing is known to have come from his press at Leith till the autumn of 1655. So completely did he settle down that he married a Scottish wife. After remaining in Leith for some time he removed to Edinburgh, where he set up his press in Hart's Close, near the Tron. His wife died in the spring of 1662, and he himself in October, 1668, being buried on the 18th of that month in Greyfriars Churchyard, Edinburgh.* In the "Register of Interments" he is designated

* "Register of Interments" (Scottish Records Society), p. 310.

"Printer to His Majesty"—a title which raises some question as to the correctness of its bestowal upon him. His imprint appears on the *Faithfull Intelligencer*, its successor the *Mercurius Britanicus*, and on the *Mercurius Politicus*, as well as on its continuation, the *Mercurius Publicus*. The period of time over which these papers extend is short. It begins on December 3, 1659, and ends on the closing days of October of the following year. There is no reason to suppose that his newspaper activity was confined to these dates.

Two theories have been advanced to account for the presence of Higgins in Scotland at all. Chalmers has his explanation. He waxes both indignant and eloquent over the fact that until he himself discovered the truth, his countrymen were entirely ignorant of the time and manner of the introduction of the newspaper press into Scotland. "It is a remarkable fact," he says, "which history was either too idle or too much ashamed to relate that the arms of Cromwell communicated to Scotland, with other benefits, the first newspaper which had ever illuminated the gloom or dispelled the fanaticism of the North. Each army carried its own printer with it, expecting either to convince the reasoning or to delude by its falsehood. King Charles carried Robert Barker with him to Newcastle in 1639,

and General Cromwell conveyed Christopher Higgins to Leith in 1652."*

As these pages show, Chalmers's claim to have discovered the first publisher of a Scottish newspaper fails, and it is to be feared that his statement about Higgins's connection with Cromwell is equally fanciful. The Protector crossed the border in pursuit of Charles and his army in August, 1651, and never returned to Scotland. Accordingly, if Higgins had any quasi-military or civil engagement it must have been under General Monk, whom Cromwell left behind him as the military administrator of the Kingdom, or under one of Monk's successors in office. It does seem strange, however, that if Higgins occupied an official position with the army as printer, Monk should have been authorised to commandeer the services of any printer or press he might require.† It is true that all known proclamations, etc., at the date came from Higgins's press, and on October 31,

* "Life of Ruddiman," p. 117. Nichols' "Literary Anecdotes," IV., 53, says more cautiously, but to the same effect, that "Robert Barker printed at Newcastle for King Charles in 1639, and Christopher Higgins reprinted at Leith for the information of the English soldiers." This last phrase is probably an echo of the opening statement of the *Mercurius Scoticus*, 1651.

† "Cal. State Papers, Dom.," 1655, p. 109.

1659, he seems to have been the only printer of whose existence the authorities in Edinburgh and Leith were aware. On that day the Colonel in command at the Leith citadel wrote Monk that some booklet, evidently of an insulting nature, had been found at the door of one of his officers, and adds that he had "ordered dilligent serch to be made for the finding out of presses, if any be in Edinburgh except what Mr. Higgins hath."* But all this is very far from proving that Higgins was the official news printer for the English army of occupation.

On the other hand we have what appears to be a more satisfactory explanation of Higgins's presence at Leith. James Watson wrote that, "after the reign of the Royal Martyr, our noble art fell into visible decay. Evan Tyler, who was then King's Printer, as well as Robert Young, having printed for the usurper against the King, was justly forfeited at Scoon and declar'd rebel by King Charles II., anno 1650, and so left the Kingdom. And Duncan Mond, stationer at Edinburgh, had a gift of King's Printer conferred on him which entirely cut off Tyler; and Robert Young was by this time dead. Tyler made over his part of the forfeited gift to some stationers at London, who sent down upon us

* "Clarke Papers," IV., 229.

Christopher Higgins and some English servants with him. They printed only some newspapers and small books and these very ill too."* Although modification may be required for some of these statements, it is certain that the Company of Stationers sent down an agent to Scotland,† and there is every probability that he set up his press in Leith. About 1652 there was quite a movement of English artisans, craftsmen and other civilians towards that town—apparently on the invitation of Monk himself.‡ Printing was undoubtedly carried on in the seaport. It was from Leith that Tyler returned to England, and if Watson's statement is true that he made the London Stationers' Company the residuary legatees of his Scottish rights, it is highly probable that the Company's agent would begin operations in Leith. Whether that be so or not, the minutes of the Company give a more solid basis for their activity in the north than the gift of any private person.

* "Hist. of Printing," p. 10.

† "Transcript of the Stationers' Register," vol. V., p. xlvii.

‡ Campbell Irons's "Leith and its Antiquities," II., 120. Hutchison ("Traditions of Leith," p. 40) quotes an advertisement regarding the wares of an English glass factory working in the citadel, from the *Kingdoms Intelligencer*, Dec. 24, 1663.

Whether as supplementary to Tyler's bequest or not, the Company received from the Scottish Parliament a patent for printing in Scotland.* Subsequent minutes make it plain that Higgins, for a time at least, was their agent under this patent, even although he always seems to have inserted his own name in the imprints of the works he set up.

The subsequent history of the Company's operations in Scotland was not altogether happy. In 1661 the validity of their patent was questioned, and "the company were about to pay £50 to the Scottish Parliament for a renewal of the patent when Lord Lauderdale advised them not to do so, alleging that he alone had the power of renewal."† About the same time too an Edinburgh "company of stationers" came into existence, and produced among other things the *Mercurius Caledonius*. As has already been stated, they do not seem to have had any valid incorporation, but were merely certain booksellers who allied themselves together for book-producing purposes. The death of Higgins in 1668 brought the Englishmen's adventure to an end, and in the following year they sold off stock and plant for £300.

* "Transcript," vol. V., xlvii.

† Ibid.

VI.—EDINBURGH AS A NEWS CENTRE.

THE earliest reference to the circulation of newspapers in Scotland seems to be that which Spalding makes. Writing under date January, 1642—the very month when the same *Diurnall* was being reprinted in Edinburgh—he says that there were “now printed paperis daylie coming from London, called *Diurnall Occurrences* declaring what is done and actit in Parliament, Upper and Lower Housis.”* Two years later Sir John Seton writing from London, April 27, 1644, to Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstoun, forbears adding any public news. “As for news heir, The Weekly Intelligence I have sent you will inform you particularlie,”† he says. The times demanded some English intelligence, but the chief centre of interest for Scotland was not south of the border. Edinburgh was the seat of government. Parliament House and the Law Courts were still there, although the Royal Court had long since swept to London. Edinburgh was accordingly the place to which the eyes and the ears of the country turned. It was the chief news centre of the Northern Kingdom.

Before the advent of newspapers, the events

* Spalding's "Troubles" (Bann. Club), II., 6.

† Dunbar's "Social Life in Former Days," II., 43.

of the day came to the knowledge of interested persons in a variety of ways. Rumour and private letters did much. The publication of Acts of Parliament and Government proclamations helped greatly. In later times printed broadsides giving accounts of particular events became common. But perhaps, the most common and at the same time the most continuous method was that of the news-letters. "To prepare such letters," says Macaulay, "became a calling in London, as it now is among the natives of India. The newswriter rambled from coffee-room to coffee-room, collecting reports, squeezed himself into the Sessions House at the Old Bailey if there was an interesting trial, nay, perhaps obtained admission to the gallery of Whitehall, and noticed how the King and Queen looked. In this way he gathered materials for weekly epistles destined to enlighten some country town or some bench of rustic magistrates." * Scotland had her share of these newswriters and news letters, and continued their use well into the 18th century. Groups of country magnates combined to hire some Edinburgh writer to send them weekly intelligence of the capital, just as the coffee-houses of the city undertook to provide news letters from the

* "History," I., 191.

southern metropolis, which were read immediately on the arrival of the mails. These letters passed from hand to hand in the country districts and circulated among the houses of the gentry. Their lives were extended and their usefulness increased by judicious copying. They ceased only when newspapers had obtained such a hold upon the community as made them no longer necessary.

As early as 1652, if not before, the Town Council of Glasgow had their regular correspondent in Edinburgh, and the service was kept up till near the close of the century. The first who held the office was John Nicoll, writer, who on September 9, 1654, was awarded £40 for, among other services, "sending the weeklie diurnalls these twa yeirs bygane to the magistrates." * This John Nicoll was probably none other than the author of the "Diary of Transactions," † and was a man well fitted for the work. Besides being "an industrious and anxious observer of passing events," he was a native of Glasgow as well. In 1660 John Rae was associated with him, and their combined duties included the sending both of MS. letters and the printed journals which were then ap-

* "Glasgow Burgh Records, 1630-1662," p. 296.

† Bannatyne Club.

pearing in the capital. In 1663 the office was transferred to Robert Mein, who occupied a somewhat prominent place in Edinburgh as a newsagent. He was postmaster as well as confectioner to the King, and for a time was correspondent for the burgh of Stirling. The Glasgow authorities supplanted him in March, 1677, for some inattention, and gave the place to John Cors. Cors was on December 29, 1680, paid £38 12s Scots "for sending of printed papers besyd the ordinary gazetes* and newspapers." Mein's name again appears in 1681 as the Corporation agent; perhaps the Council had had compassion on him for the sufferings he had endured at the hands of the Privy Council for his devotion to these same news letters.†

* The minute has reference to the work Cors had done during the preceding two years. If "gazetes" is the name of a printed periodical, it probably refers to the *London Gazette*, although in this same month of December, 1680, an *Edinburgh Gazette* was appearing.

† The whole Glasgow arrangements in the eighth decade of the 17th century for acquiring news are very curious. A minute of Council, *e.g.*, authorises the payment to the Provost of "ten merks which he gave Donald McKay for half a barrel of herring which was promised him for sending the news letters and gazettes extraordinary quhilk half barrel of herring is ordained to be given yeerly for that end."—"Records," Sep. 2, 1681. Donald's place of residence is not clear.

As befitted a smaller burgh, Stirling had to be more economical in satisfying its desire for news from the capital. The Council, however, seem to have been more generously minded than their colleagues of Glasgow, for, when they made a start on June 5, 1665, they desired the news "for information of the people." They secured Robert Mein to be their correspondent, and agreed to pay him "twa shillings sterling weeklie, as Glasgow and utheris burghs payes." * The engagement, however, lasted only a little over three years, the Council withdrawing because "of the great expence upon the town in paying 20 shillings Scottis weeklie," and because "in this peaceable time there is no necessity to be at such a charge." † For the next forty years the Stirling Council spasmodically paid sums to Edinburgh news letter writers to keep them in touch with events, and to forward to them such newspapers as were deemed suitable. The publication, however, of the *Edinburgh Gazette* in 1699 rendered all such private bargaining unnecessary. The Council waited long enough to discover the kind of journal the *Gazette* was to be, and finding that it provided another chance of being thrifty,

* "Stirling Records, 1519-1666," p. 249.

† Ibid., 1667-1752, p. 6.

adopted it on the ground that "they may be served with the weeklie news by the *Edinburgh Gazette*, which contains both forraigne and domestick oôcurrences at ane far more easy rate than by the transactions formerly made." * At different times thereafter the Council became subscribers for the *Courant* and the *Echo*.

The experiences of Montrose may be taken as typical of many a smaller burgh. In 1694 they were supplied with news letters, but in June, 1700, arrangements were made with "John Ritchie, Under Clerk of the Post Office, Edinboro," to forward "weiklie to the burgh, 2 *Edinburgh Gazettes*, 2 *London Gazettes*, and 3 *Flying Posts*, and 3 Postscripts with extraordinary occurrences" for "the sum of £6 sterling yearly." It seems an ample supply, but precedence in reading came in to hinder the papers doing their work perfectly. "An old tradition of the burgh runs, that the 'burghers of Montrose were aye nineteen weeks ahint time.' Each member of Council was allowed to keep the paper for a week, the consequence being that it was nineteen weeks ere the last member received his budget." † Dumfries had even a more deplorable state of matters to

* Ibid., p. 90.

† Low's "Bibliography of Montrose Literature," p. 2.

rectify. The news letters that arrived for the town from Edinburgh were commandeered by the neighbouring gentry, so that the citizens who were paying for them were deprived of their benefit. To remedy the evil the Council in 1696 ordered that the weekly letter "should not be sent abroad out of the town in all tyme coming" but that "the same was to ly in the clerk's office, there to be keeped by him for the use and benefite of this burgh." *

These may be taken as examples of what was looked for from Edinburgh. The letters which news-writers may have sent were doubtless often gossipy, and some of them may have been indispensable to an understanding of the political situation. The newspapers were not gossipy, and they were not calculated to enlighten anyone on the state of home affairs. The average reader supped full of accounts of his country's foreign campaigns and of the doings of governments which could only in the remotest way interest him. But Edinburgh was the channel through which such information as there was trickled to the rest of Scotland: and to Edinburgh accordingly all turned.

* M'Dowall's "History of Dumfries," p. 514.

VII.—THE CENSORSHIP OF THE SCOTTISH PRESS.

THE authority under which all printing was allowed in Scotland goes back to the enactment, 5, Mary, cap.27, passed by the Scottish Estates on Feb. 1, 1551. It solemnly declared that “na Prentar presume, attempt or tak upone hand, to prent ony bukis, ballatis, sangis, blasphemationnis, rymes, or Tragedeis, outhir in latin or Inglis toung in ony tymes to cum, unto the tyme the samin be sene, vewit and examit be sum wyse and discreit persounis depute thairto be the Ordinaris quhatsoever” under pain of confiscation of the property, and the banishment of the person, of the offender. The range of prohibition was wide enough to include periodical news sheets when they began to appear a century later, and those in authority exercised the right of examination previous to publication as long as they possibly could. One of the last acts of the Privy Council in reference to literary matters was to make the publisher of the *Edinburgh Courant* promise, October 8, 1705, that he would print “nothing concerning the Government till first the same be revised by the clerks of Her Majesty’s Privy Council.”

Even the Edinburgh Town Council, when it sought to take the place of the defunct Privy Council, licensed the publication of the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, December 24, 1718, on the understanding that the editor would be "obliged to answer the Magistrates and Council for the time being for what he shall print and publish, and before publication to give ane coppie of his Print to the Magistrats." As late as 1734 the Council issued instructions that "to prevent the dispersing of prophane or scandalous Papers, none shall presume to expose to sale any papers or Pamphlets (except such as are published by authority) until they be seen or approven of by the Magistrates or any whom they shall appoint for that purpose" on pain of "imprisonment during pleasure." * By 1734, however, the thunderings of the Council were as the sound of shot in an empty barrel.

The Church, through its General Assembly, seems also early to have acquired some power and say in book-production, as is shown by the notable case of Thomas Bassandyne, who in 1568 was ordered by the General Assembly to with-

* See a pamphlet, "Some Remarks upon what is humbly supposed to be a Spurious Paper." Edinburgh, 1734.

draw certain volumes from circulation. The interest of the Assembly was undoubtedly circumscribed by the moral and religious issues which they saw hung upon easy access to books and pamphlets, and the possible flooding of the country by what would tend to destroy both the Church as it had been set up, and even morality itself. As it happened, the advent of newspapers into Scotland coincided with a crisis in ecclesiastical affairs, and the Church found itself compelled to attempt some supervision over what might reach the ears of the people either through the news sheets or by the more careless methods of the jade rumour. In 1643, accordingly, the Commission of General Assembly approached the Convention of Estates to suggest that parish ministers should be employed in spreading news over the country. "Because," said the petition, "thru the want of sure and tymeous intelligence a greate pairt of the people are either left to uncertane rumours or flichted by the negligence of common bearers, or abuseit with malignant informations that thei nather know thair awin danger nor the danger of religion in the cuntrey. A solide ordour would be set down whereby intelligence may goe furth from Edinburgh to everie shyre and so to everie particular pastor That the people may be informed both of thair

danger and dewtie. . . .” * It is perhaps not to be regretted that this method of censoring public news did not commend itself.

So far as can be learned, no special need of authoritative interference with the printing of news in Scotland arose until the Commonwealth had been fairly established for some time. † If any papers appeared they were probably like the *Diurnall Occurrences*. In 1651, the *Mercurius Scoticus*, the first paper to be produced on Scottish soil, was published. Before six months had passed, an edict was issued which brought it to an end. The Commissioners sent down by the English Parliament to settle affairs in Scotland, sitting at Dalkeith, summarily suppressed it and every other possible journal—“they discharged the printing of Diurnalls att Leith or elsewhere.” ‡ They appear to have had the *Mercurius* specially in their minds, although it is hard to understand what damage the little journal could do. That the prohibition was not taken seriously by everybody is shown by the

* “Acts of the Parliament of Scotland,” VI., i., 10.

† The newly issued volume of the “Register of Privy Council,” covering the period 1638-43, contains no reference to the publication of newspapers.

‡ Lamont’s “Diary,” p. 37, under date Jan. 20, 1652.

fact that within three months of its promulgation there appeared at Leith itself a reprint of the London *Diurnall of Some Passages and Affairs*, which continued for several weeks. It probably came under the ban, for the Commonwealth was not partial to the press. The *Mercurius Politicus* was indeed allowed to be reprinted first at Leith and then in Edinburgh,* but it may be said to have had official sanction for its publication. The general attitude of the Government is best expressed in the report of the proceedings of Cromwell's Council, September 22, 1655—"Several orders are past the Councill to regulate the press and to suppress all weekley printed bookes unless such as are allowed by His Highness and Councill," †—and this applied to Scotland as well as to England.

The Restoration brought no relaxation of bonds for the Scottish press. The whole atmosphere was against the living and flourishing of a newspaper. "Clearly for newspaper and pamphlet literature at least," says Prof. Masson, "the Restoration was an arrest and paralysis. Not only was the number of news-

* Arnot's "History of Edinburgh," p. 464. Chalmers ("Life of Ruddiman," p. 117) gives Oct. 26, 1653, as the date of No. 1.

† "The Clarke Papers," III., 53.

papers kept at the lowest possible minimum; but that minimum being under Government management far more strictly than at any time during the preceding eighteen years of the Revolution, and free pamphleting having ceased or nearly so, all heart, all pith, was taken out of English journalism." * Scotland was in even a worse case. Sydserf tried his hand with the *Mercurius Caledonius*, but it soon withered in his grasp, and the country had to subsist on the London journals or on illicit reproductions of them from Edinburgh. As great a blow as any came from the monopoly in printing which Charles II. granted in 1671 to Andrew Anderson for the next forty-one years—a monopoly which James Watson, who did much to encourage and foster the newspaper press, bitterly said gave printing throughout Scotland "a dead stroke, for by it no printer could print anything from a Bible to a ballad without Mr. Anderson's license." As late as 1699 Anderson's widow contended strenuously, but happily unsuccessfully, that the grant to which she had become heir prevented the printing of news of all kinds by any except herself or under her authority.

But the chief obstruction was the Scottish Privy Council. Charles II. had hardly been

* "Life of Milton," VI., 332.

seated firmly on the throne before the work of repression began. Incensed by the publication of some Covenanting literature the Council gave summary orders against the issue of any "bookes or papers" whatsoever unless permission had first been obtained.* The order was almost immediately followed up by an even more comprehensive prohibition—"The Lords of Councill being informed that of late diverse bookes and pamphlets have been printed or reprinted within the Kingdom prejudiciall to religion, his Majesties authoritie and the peace of the Kingdom, therefore they command and charge that no printer or companie within this Kingdom residing in any burgh or place whatsomever presume or take upon hand to print or reprint any book or paper of whatsomever subject without license first had and obtained from his Majesties Secret Councill or some delegate appointed to revise the same as they will be answerable upon their highest perill and ordaines intimation to be made hereof by the Magistratts at the Mercatt croces of all burghes where the said printers or companies reseids."† It was under this Act that Robert Mein applied for and received permission to publish "ane

* "Reg. Priv. Council." Nov. 7, 1661.

† Ibid., Nov. 19, 1661.

diurnall weeklie.* No wonder that the printers and booksellers of Edinburgh felt that their trade was gone. They complained that even the "printing and venting of Bibles and schoolbookes necessary for the Kingdom" had been summarily stopped, and asked the Council to explain the scope of their act. My Lords so far relaxed the stringency of their commandment that they said their prohibitions referred only to the "printing of new books never heretofore printed or allowed to be sold in this Kingdom or the reprinting of other bookes printed elsewhere before they have been revised by warrand of the Councill." †

As the reign of Charles drew to a close greater stringency was observed in the matter of news. Embargo was laid even on the reading of manuscript news-letters in public coffee-houses—the great news centres of the towns—until they had "first been presented to the Bishop of Edinburgh or any other privy counsellor or to the clerks of Council that they may consider them and thereby false and seditious news and slanders may be prevented." ‡ For violating this order Robert Mein, probably the same as

* Ibid., Dec. 5, 1661.

† Ibid., Dec. 10, 1661.

‡ Jan. 2, 1680, Fountainhall's "Decisions," I., 73.

before was allowed to publish a newspaper, and who acted as the Edinburgh news correspondent of the Glasgow Town Council, was imprisoned in August of the same year, although he contended that he had previously shown the letter to the Earl of Lauderdale, whose movements it concerned. His plea was evidently of some weight, for "he was liberated in a day or two with a rebuke." *

In 1688 one or two reprints of London papers, like the *Test Paper* and the *Weekly Journal from London*, were published from the Holyrood Press by Peter Bruce, but these were sent out under the direct warrant of King James, and were little else than *ex parte* pamphlets on the political discussions of the day. After his flight, solemn reasons why James had forfeited the throne were drawn up. Prominent among them was the illegality of setting up this very press in Holyrood. Though he used newspapers, neither "the most Catholic King" nor his servants had any love for them. In the preceding year John Cockburn, minister of Ormiston, applied for and received permission from the Privy Council to publish a literary review, which he named the *Bibliotheca Universalis*. It might have been thought that

* Ibid., I., 113.

such a publication would have escaped grave offence, but the keen eyes of the Scottish Chancellor discovered disrespect to the Roman Catholic faith in two of the articles, and without consulting his colleagues, he recalled the permission to print after one number had appeared. "He would cause his own churchmen do it better,"* was his scornful comment, and Scotland's first review died at its birth.

Nor did the Revolution bring much liberty to the press. On neutral matters a certain license was allowed, but wherever the actions of the Government were involved rigorous censorship was applied. An act of the Privy Council, dated January 28, 1690, "discharged all printers within this Kingdom to print any pamphlet, books, or others relating to the Government until the same be seen, revised and examined by the Earl of Cassils," or some other duly authorised person, under pain of banishment and confiscation of goods.† It was not till March 10, 1699, that warrant was granted to James Donaldson for the publication of the *Edinburgh Gazette*, the first Scottish periodical that may be called a newspaper in the modern sense of the term. Even then little real liberty was allowed,

* Ibid., I., 502.

† Maitland "Miscellany," II., 237.

for the Act of Council “recommends to the Lord High Chancellor to nominat and appoint a particular persone to be Supervisor of the said Gazetts before they be exposed to publict view, printed or sold.”*

By this decree the responsibility of a newspaper proprietor and printer to the Council began in the interval between the sheet leaving the press and its issue to the public, for the provision in Donaldson's license that the *Gazette* should be approved before printing does not seem to have been enforced. Before many months were over, however, the Council drove its supervision further back. Donaldson inadvertently printed a paragraph which gave them high offence, and they seized the occasion to declare their determination to censor the manuscript of a newspaper even before it reached the printer's hands—“The Lords of his Majesties Privy Councill Doe heirby appoint any one of their present Clerks or their Deput to Revise all the Gazetts printed at Edr. before they shall be given in to the press, And appoints Captain [] Donaldson to bring the Coppies of the saids Gazetts to the saids Clerks and appoints them to mark the same before they be given in to the Printing house and the

* Ibid., p. 233.

said Captain Donaldson to cause print his Gazetts according to the Coppie marked by the saids Clerks of the Privy Councill." * Censorship could hardly exceed the severity of this order.

On the same day the Council issued a warrant for the apprehension of Donaldson "for printing in his Gazet several things which are not truths and for which he has no warrand," † and in due course he was committed to the Tolbooth. We have no means of knowing the special bit of news that irritated his superiors, but it does not appear to have been exceedingly deadly. Five days later he appeared before the Council and declared his absolute submission. He begged that "they may be pleased to lett him know in what manner he shall make his acknowledgements and give him instructions how to act for the future and their Lordships commands shall be cheerfully obeyed and punctually observed." An abject journalist could go no further, and without comment the Council gave warrant for his liberation. ‡

* "Reg. Privy Council," June 8, 1699.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid., June 13, 1699. It seems somewhat strange that no steps were taken against Watson, the printer of the *Gazette*.

But Donaldson was not yet out of the clutches of the Council. He had bitterly to complain that they played him false in violating the grant they themselves had made him. When they allowed the issue of the *Gazette*, they had "discharged any other persons whatsoever to pen or publish the like," yet on February 13, 1705, they arbitrarily gave permission to Adam Boig to publish an *Edinburgh Courant*, and assigned him Monday, Wednesday, and Friday as his special days. When Donaldson promptly remonstrated against this palpable infringement on his rights, they as promptly threw out his petition. Worst of all, when Boig got into trouble over the insertion of an advertisement which the tender feelings of the Privy Council declared hurt their honour, they impartially suspended the papers of both Donaldson and Boig on June 26, 1705, to the no small astonishment and indignation of the former, who had no part whatever in the offence. No doubt the Council soon released the *Gazette* from the "stop" they had put upon it, but the action was none the less arbitrary and oppressive.

An examination of the early products of the Scottish periodical press always causes astonishment that so little local news is given. The long dreary pages are filled with intelligence from the ends of the earth, and the chronicle of

local events is confined to a few lines concerning a murder or a theft. The reason is obvious. The Council kept a watchful eye on all that appeared, and discouraged or even forbade news that concerned the Kingdom at large or the district in which the paper was issued. Newspaper proprietors were too anxious not to offend the powerful Council on whose fiat the very existence of their publication depended. They accordingly excluded home politics and home events, for they never could tell in what innocent-looking paragraph the cause of instant suppression might lurk. Donaldson naively confessed the principle on which he worked. He declared he "did never omit any domestick News that he judged pertinent though he neither midled with matters which he had cause to believe would not be acceptable nor every story and triffling matter he heard." *

The sands in the glass, however, were running low for the Privy Council, with all its tyranny and irresponsibility. The Act of Union, 1707, made its continuance dependent on the will of Parliament—"The Queen's Majesty," ran the section, "and her royal successors may continue a Privy Council in

* Maitland "Miscellany," II., 252.

Scotland for preserving of public peace and order until the Parliament of Great Britain shall think fit to alter it or establish any other effectual method for that end." * It was abolished in the following year, unwept and unhonoured. Defoe openly rejoiced in its destruction. "It was thought," he says, "both burdensome and dangerous, and indeed the Council in Scotland acting arbitrarily had given the lovers of liberty such an aversion to them that they could not hear of it," † an opinion with which Hill Burton agrees. "No Scotsman," he says, "with a sense of justice and civil liberty could lament the fall of the Scots Secret Council." ‡ Its disappearance was a great step towards the emancipation of the Press.

* Article 20.

† "Hist. of the Union," Appendix I., p. 27.

‡ "History of Scotland," VIII., 212.

VIII.—THE EDINBURGH TOWN COUNCIL AND THE PRESS.

For a time it seemed as if Scottish journalism had only exchanged masters, for, apparently without any authority whatever,* the Town Council of Edinburgh assumed to itself the powers formerly held by the Privy Council.† Only another Scottish Town Council had the chance of exercising a similar authority, but Glasgow took no such step when its *Courant* appeared in 1715.

Perhaps the Edinburgh Council considered that they were merely following a proper sequence of events in assuming the position of censors to the press. At the opening of the century much illicit printing had been going on in the capital, and the Privy Council, in the autumn of 1703, had called for the Magistrates and questioned them regarding the matter. They

* Hugo Arnot's phrase is—"the plenipotent jurisdiction they assumed."

† It should be noted that the Edinburgh Town Council exercised an apparently legal, watchful care over the press productions of the city during the second half of the sixteenth century—Dickson & Edmond's "Annals of Scottish Printing," pp. 156, 202.

at the same time laid upon them the duty of exercising a due supervision over everything that issued from the press, and of awarding punishment to transgressors. The Town Council minute shows how the Magistrates smarted under the rebuke. "Considering," it reads, "that by ordinance of the Lords of Privy Council, no printer is to print anything unless the samen be dewly allowed and authorised, And that the printers of this burgh, having transgressed this ordinance, have occasioned the Magistrats of Edinburgh to be questioned by their lordships for not restraining thir said printers from printing and publishing papers not at all allowed, And withall scandalous and of evil consequence, dow therefor, to prevent the lyke for tyme comeing statuts and ordains that no printer or printers servant within the citie or suburbs, and for whom his master shall be answerable, shall not hereafter print any books, pamphlets* or other papers whatsoever unles dewly allowed by publick Authority under the penalty of losing their freedome of the burgh and otherwyse fined and punished att the will of the Magistrats, And for the more sure per-

* The word "pamphlet" was commonly, though not exclusively, used for a single issue of a newspaper.

formance of the premises apoynts the whole printers, present and to come, to give bond and cautione for themselves, apprentices and servants observing of the premiss and also that they affix their names to whatever bookes, pamphlets or papers they shall print and publish." * The printers, five in number, were at the same time summoned into the presence of the Magistrates, and doubtless several unpleasant things were said to them. The printers in turn became angry and appealed from the decision to the Privy Council itself, urging that they were willing to fulfil the Order of Council, 1690, and declaring that they considered the action of the Magistrates contrary to the Claim of Right. As it turned out, the harried printers could not have spoken to less sympathetic ears. Further orders were immediately issued to the Magistrates to take special notice of "all unlicensed papers and those who printed and sold them," and "to call for and examine the said printers and committ them to prison untill the same be reported to the said Lords of Her Majesty's Privy Council." †

When, therefore, the Privy Council was abolished in 1708, it may never have occurred to the Magistrates and Council, or even to the

* Town Council Minutes, Oct. 29, 1703.

† Maitland "Miscellany," II., 236-40.

printers themselves, that any dubiety existed as to the right of the Town Council to supervise newspapers. The question was certainly raised in 1734. In that year the Magistrates re-issued certain regulations for the newspaper press, and the document called forth a vigorous protest from a pamphleteer.* Playfully assuming that the regulations were the production of some practical joker, the writer pours ridicule on the idea that the Magistrates had any right of control over the contents and circulation of newspapers within the city. "I believe he has invested them," he says, "with a power they did not at any time imagine they had and what nobody believes they have. . . . If there is such a power in the Magistrates, it must be confessed that it is a singular power, and such a power as no Magistrates in Britain, they alone excepted, have pretended to, and such a power therefore I am confident the Magistrates do not imagine they have." The pamphleteer was wrong, although the exercise of the assumed right had been in abeyance for some time. It had been in

* "Some Remarks upon what is humbly supposed to be a Spurious Paper intituled Rules and Instructions by the Town Council of Edinburgh to be observed by all who are permitted to cry Gazettes and other papers or sell roses and carry links." Edinburgh, 1734.

active operation during a period of more than a dozen years. It is to the credit of the Magistrates that their hand was less heavy than that of the Privy Council.*

It is difficult to understand exactly the extent of the authority claimed by the Town Council. On February 28, 1708, they ordered that the city printers affix their names to all "public papers or pamphlets" they may publish, and on June 11 of the same year they bestowed upon Adam Boig the exclusive right of publishing the lists of the names of the Scottish members of Parliament. On September 6, 1710, they issued an order as to the terms on which the paper criers were to be supplied with the news sheets and other printed matter to be sold on the streets. "The Councill statute and ordain," ran the edict, "the prices of the papers to be payed be the paper cryers to the printers as follows, viz., each quair of news papers or pamphletts sixteen shillings per quair, almanacks seven shillings per quair, ballads seven

* There is some little ground, however, for supposing that the date 1734 in the pamphlet quoted is a misprint for 1714. The Town Council minutes of 1734 do not record the issue of such regulations, while they were actually issued in 1714. The lateness of the date also seems to be adverse to 1734.

shillings per quair, storie books of one sheet five shillings per dozen." They even ordained that each printer should pay two shillings Scots to an officer whom they had appointed to supervise the news lads, and sixpennies Scots to each news crier for each new print they published.* It does not appear, however, that the Council considered themselves the *fons et origo* of the right of starting a newspaper. Several papers were begun in Edinburgh, authority to publish which is not found in the Council minutes, nor do the papers themselves bear that they had received any authority. This is the case with the *Flying Post* of 1708, the *Examiner* of 1710, and the *Tatler* of 1711. On the other hand, David Fearn, advocate, when he differed with Donaldson over the *Scots Postman and Edinburgh Gazette*, asked the Council for permission to print and publish the *Scots Postman* himself, which he received August 17, 1709. Daniel Defoe was authorised to issue the second *Edinburgh Courant* on February 1, 1710, and the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* received permission to appear on December 24, 1718. This was probably the last time the Town Council exercised the right, for the *Caledonian Mercury*

* Town Council Minutes, Sept. 6, 1710.

neither asked nor received their sanction. The inference, accordingly, seems to be that only when the projectors of newspapers considered that their position would be more secure if they had the formal permission of the Council, did they apply for it, and the Council do not appear to have interfered when the responsibility of publication was undertaken without their approval. The Union of 1707 proved, accordingly, a great step towards liberating the press from galling restrictions.

The Town Council, however, continued for some years longer to keep a watchful eye upon the contents of the public prints. As is noted in its proper place, the *Edinburgh Courant* came under its censure in 1723, and two years later the *Caledonian Mercury* had to wage warfare on behalf of the right to regulate what should appear in its own columns.

IX.—THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

As the eighteenth century advanced the phrase, "the liberty of the press" is more frequently heard, though it is difficult to discover the precise meaning which those who used the term put into it. Judged by the contents of the public journals, they were contented with a liberty which had narrow limits. The fear of reporting home news did indeed gradually subside, but the reporter was ever in dread of what might happen if he transgressed bounds and became a commentator on the events he chronicled.

A case which illustrated the perils to be encountered took place in 1732. A forced settlement was to be carried through at the West Kirk, Edinburgh, and a riot occurred at the reading of the edict for it on March 12. An account of the events was given in the *Evening Courant*. The Magistrates of the city took serious offence at the newspaper's tone, and McEuen, the proprietor, was charged before them with having "dressed up the story in colours very disadvantageous" to several of their number, although at the same time it was acknowledged that he had "kept within the

bounds of truth." McEuen had declared that "it is submitted to the judgment of mankind if there was much more order, caution, and discretion observed by those who took upon them to compose the tumult than even by the mob itself. It may be justly queried whether the ordering out of the city guard without the bounds of the city to act a part in this affair and whether imprisoning Fleucker the beadle were legal? Whether the town's guard firing, killing and wounding so many persons without reading the proclamation as the law directs be not a great crime? and whether the captain of the guard's beating Mr. M'Vicar's children and servant was not a manifest riot if not hame-sucken?" To-day the paper would be held to have performed a manifest public duty in raising such questions, but in 1732 the freedom could only be regarded as an offence against the honour, dignity, and place of the magistracy. McEuen was fined £10 sterling. He attempted to get the decreet reduced before the Court of Session, but failed. He pleaded that "news-writers by inveterate custom are tolerated to publish historical accounts of transactions foreign and domestic whether reflecting honour or reproach upon the actors," but the contention of the Magistrates was upheld that the "paragraph was not in the spirit of a cool news-

writer but bears evident marks of rancour and resentment." *

Some years later another case came before the courts which throws some light on what was considered the legitimate sphere of a public newspaper. In the *Caledonian Mercury* of September 17, 1760, a paragraph appeared, mentioning a certain Glasgow citizen by name and attributing to him some abominable actions. Three months afterwards a full withdrawal was published, but the defamed person nevertheless brought an action in the Court of Session against the newspaper for damages. The decision was given on January 28, 1763. "When this cause, which concerns the liberty of the press, was advised," it runs, "it occurred as a matter of no slight difficulty to ascertain the boundary betwixt that liberty which must be indulged to a newspaper in order to inform or divert the public and that licentiousness which without any evil intention may do mischief." † In spite of the difficulty, however, the Court proceeded to redd the marches. "One thing is clear," it went on, "that the writer of a newspaper is not privileged to communicate to the public any private transaction however certain his information may be.

* "Dict. of Decisions," 1791, I., 233.

† Kames's "Decisions," 1752-68, p. 271.

He must confine himself to what is publicly transacted and what must spread of course without a newspaper; in which case a newspaper has no other effect than to quicken the intelligence." On the whole the dictum was sound and safe, although no definition was attempted of what was public and what was private. In the case which brought the matter into the Court, to record the arrest of a man belonged to the department of public news, and therefore publication of the fact was held justifiable. To call a man "a worthless fellow deserving punishment adequate to his atrocious crimes" was on the other hand considered an encroachment on private affairs, and accordingly illegal and punishable—the demands of justice in this case being satisfied with an award of £15 damages.

Events more germane to the subject of the liberty of the press took place in 1765. In that year the whole country was scandalised by an alleged murder which took place in Forfarshire, and in which a Lieut. Ogilvie and his sister-in-law, Catherine Nairn, were accused of poisoning the latter's husband, Thomas Ogilvie, within a few months of their marriage. The trial took place in the beginning of August, and resulted in the conviction of both. Ogilvie was condemned to death, but sentence on Mrs. Ogilvie

was postponed because of her condition. The case aroused extraordinary interest, and various attempts were made to have the convictions set aside or the sentence modified. In October several of the Edinburgh papers published an "opinion" by a London barrister setting forth that irregularities had taken place in the trial, and that an appeal lay from the Court of Justiciary to the House of Lords. The document appeared first in the *Weekly Journal* on October 2, and it was reproduced in the *Courant*, the *Caledonian Mercury*, and the *Scots Magazine* within the next few days. The Lords of Session looked upon the publication as an infringement of their privileges, and the printers of the offending journals were cited to appear before them. The case was dealt with on November 25, the special causes of offence being that the whole case was at the time under the consideration of the King in Council, that the dignity of the Court was impinged upon, and that such publications would discourage gentlemen from serving on juries. The delinquents made no attempt to justify themselves, although it does seem as if complete answers were possible to each and all of the charges. They were not even represented by counsel. The printer of the *Weekly Journal* did indeed timidly plead in explanation of his offence that he had only

printed what was already in extensive circulation in the city in several manuscripts. But they all acknowledged their "wrong-doing" and submitted themselves to the Court. The bench did not act severely, for the defendants were merely rebuked and dismissed from the bar.*

It is evident that the case had a deeper significance than the mere undesirability of commenting on an action *lite pendente*, even if the offence came under that head. The Lord Advocate, in presenting the facts, said that "the publication was a challenge to enter into a paper war in the newspapers in vindication of a most respectable jury," but the assertion was only part of the make-believe, and the real cause of the prosecution was left unnamed. He even commended the *Edinburgh Advertiser* for not inserting the obnoxious document, all the while that the *London Chronicle* and the *London Magazine* both containing it lay on the counters of the Edinburgh booksellers, and no steps were taken to bring them to task for their contempt. It is to be feared that the real offence lay in the boldness with which papers circulating widely among the citizens dared to criticise the doings

* *Scots Magazine*, XXVII., 561.

of the authorities, and to suggest imperfection in the administration of public justice.

Arnot, who knew the case at first hand, has no doubt about the significance of the prosecution. He considered it a deliberate attack upon the liberties of the press. He declared it "tended to the complete suppression of the liberty of the press and of freedom of communicating of the ideas between man and man," and denounced the pusillanimity of the newspaper proprietors in tamely acquiescing in the affront. "Nothing," he said, "could be more dastardly than this submission of the printers. It was impossible for men in their circumstances to deserve worse of their country. It is by such abject timidity alone that usurpation and tyranny are suffered by gradual steps to grow into an established law." *

Two years afterwards another prosecution on almost similar lines took place in Edinburgh. It was the time of the great Douglas Cause, and just before the Court of Session delivered its judgment, a pamphlet named "*Dorando*," written by no less a person than James Boswell, who was a violent partisan in the struggle, made its appearance in Edinburgh. It was manifestly a long comment on the case under the

* "*Hist. of Edinburgh*," p. 449.

form of a Spanish tale, and nobody could mistake what was meant. Extracts were given in the *Caledonian Mercury*, *Courant*, *Weekly Journal* and *Advertiser*. The *Scots Magazine* also published a letter from a correspondent on the case. All received one common citation to appear before the Court to answer for their contempt. Although the defendants had not such a good cause, this time they were represented by counsel and sent in memorials as well—the memorial of the *Courant* being prepared by Boswell. The *Mercury* advanced the opinion that it was not in the interests of the newspapers wilfully to do anything to offend the authorities. By a curious mode of reasoning they had convinced themselves that the legislature was friendly to their efforts, for had not Government made newspapers a source of revenue through the Stamp Acts. How then could they be biassed against them? Besides, had not Parliament “encouraged the circulation of newspapers into the most remote part of the kingdom by exempting them, under certain regulations, from postage.” It was indeed a prejudiced mind that could see in the provisions of 4 Geo. III. cap.24 a government liking for the public press, for that Act was intended to benefit members of Parliament and provide an extra income for certain State officials, and had no

friendly eye for the periodicals they used for the purpose. But all such reasonings were swept aside by the Court. The printers were rebuked and "admonished to abstain from such publications in time coming."

Some colour is given to the idea that the Court was aiming alone at the freedom claimed by newspapers from the fact that nothing for a time was done to proceed against those who had published the pamphlet itself. It indeed bore no publisher's name (a letter by Boswell gives his name as Wilkie) and two editions of it were sold off in the city without censure being incurred. It was only when a third appeared that the Court stepped in and suppressed the publication.*

During the next decade considerable progress was made in removing restrictions upon the freedom of comment enjoyed by the press. Arnot cannot be accused of taking too rosy a view, and yet, writing in 1779, he says—"Within these few years a great change has taken place in the liberty of the press. The conduct of persons in public office has been animadverted upon with freedom, and in several cases censured with acrimony. The bench has not escaped those criticisms for which, so long

* Leask's "James Boswell," p. 64.

as they are just, it will always be the better, and from recent observation, we may venture to affirm that till the country shall suffer some melancholy revolution, no judge will be hardy enough to challenge publications which twenty years ago no man would have ventured to print. This important change can only be ascribed to an increasing liberality of sentiment in the country, joined to certain persons having started up who, convinced of the importance of the liberty of the press to the freedom of the constitution, were resolved to exercise it, and who were possessed of a determined principle which, when accompanied with a consciousness of right, would have supported them against the frown of a Court." *

Much indeed had taken place in the interval between 1767 and 1779. South of the border a determined fight had been waged and won for a certain amount of political liberty. The constituted authorities had no reason to congratulate themselves on the issue of their conflict

* "Hist. of Edinburgh," p. 451. That there is some truth in this estimate seems to be shown by the fact that the printing presses of Edinburgh increased from six in 1763 to sixteen in 1790, and that during the same period numerous periodical ventures were begun (Creech's "Fugitive Pieces," p. 82).

with John Wilkes, of the notorious *North Briton*. By a side issue the liberty of criticising even the highest in the land had apparently been gained. Nor had the Government been more successful in 1771 in its efforts to concuss the printers of London into silence about proceedings in Parliament. Such an outcry had been raised over the attempt that Parliament was fain to allow its own regulations to become a dead letter. The liberty which their brethren of England claimed also became the possession of their confreres of the north.

Not that all difficulty was removed. The London *Public Advertiser* of February 16, 1774, printed a communication which commented severely upon the rise of taxation and upon certain dangers to Church and State which had resulted from the Revolution of 1688 and the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty. A copy of the audacious print found its way into the hands of one of the staff of the *Caledonian Mercury*, and the proprietor was about to reprint it when his subordinate noticed in the Journal of the House of Commons that a prosecution had been ordered against the *Public Advertiser*. The *Caledonian Mercury* took fright, although most of the type had been set, and deserted publication, much to their annoyance, for they had "had no doubt about falling

upon a way to introduce it with safety into their paper." * It certainly throws some light upon the bonds in which the newspaper press were still held, that the objectionable document was soon printed by itself, and, being sold, was scattered over the whole country.

We have no means of knowing what constituted the liberty of the press in Arnot's eyes. No doubt it was something vastly more restricted than what the fourth estate now enjoys. But even the measure of freedom he rejoiced in was doomed to curtailment before the century closed. The "melancholy revolution," which he thought might work injuriously, actually came, although it did not break out in Scotland. The French Revolution spread discontent in various directions, and Scotland did not escape the infection of unrest. Societies were formed whose purpose it was to broaden the basis of political liberty. In Edinburgh more than one newspaper was started to call attention to the stirring events abroad and to emphasise the meaning these events carried for the citizens. Government met the situation by assuming the baseness of any agitation against themselves and by vigorous prosecution when discontent found utterance. Lord Cockburn draws a melancholy

* "The Lyon in Mourning," III., 298, 306.

picture of the abject condition to which the people were reduced. "Nothing," he says, "was viewed with such horror as any political congregation not friendly to existing power. No one could have taken a part in the business without making up his mind to be a doomed man. No prudence could protect against the falsehood or inaccuracy of spies: and a first conviction of sedition by a judge-picked jury was followed by fourteen years' transportation"*. He does not hesitate to indicate that the law was stretched to procure convictions, and when a newspaper was concerned any charge was sufficient, if it ended in crippling or destroying it. To report what the Government pronounced to be seditious speeches was as bad as to utter them. The *Edinburgh Gazetteer* may not have been the best mannered periodical, but the legal machinery of the day was used to reduce it to speechless impotence. The merest suggestion of disloyalty to the Government even in thought sent the editor of the *Bee* into the most apologetic mood. The other newspapers of the city considered their duty done if they succeeded in becoming mere colourless chroniclers. The day of leaders had not yet arrived, and editors had nothing in the way of comment favourable

* "Memorials." p. 89.

or unfavourable to put in their place. "There was no free, and consequently no discussing press," said Lord Cockburn summarily, and the eighteenth century closed with the liberty of the press a phrase that had practically little of the meaning that it now has.

X.—THE COLLECTION OF "COPY."

DURING the period covered by these volumes, the press had little or no knowledge of the functionary now called the "editor." The name most frequently employed for the person mainly responsible for the matter of a paper was the "author," even although he may not have written one word of the contents. Even that term was not uniformly used. Donaldson of the *Edinburgh Gazette* (1699) is called "the Gazetteer" in the Privy Council Register, and his own designation for himself is "the writer of the Gazette." In like fashion, the editor of the *Courant* about the same time was colloquially known as the "Courantier." It was only as the eighteenth century closed that the word "editor" began to take on its present signification. In 1798 William Brown, of the *Weekly Journal*, employs the name as descriptive of himself,* but the usage was by no means assured. In the case which brought the *Scots Chronicle* into court in 1797, Lord President Campbell learnedly discoursed on the point.

* The earliest use of the word in the modern sense quoted in the "New English Dictionary" is dated 1803. Cf. Leslie Stephen's "Studies of a Biographer," I., 37—"The Evolution of Editors."

One of the difficulties was to discover what exactly was the position of Morthland, one of the two defenders. In the summons and condescendence he was variously described as proprietor, editor, conductor, director, manager, and superintendent. The last four words, the Lord President said, "are indeed no more than amplifications or further explanations of the preceding epithet, viz., editor. Johnson in his dictionary makes this term synonymous with publisher. The one is the Latin word: the other is English. He who prepares a work for publication is literally the editor, and this seems to be nearly the same thing with publisher. The Act 38 Geo. III. c. 78 § 28 seems to consider them as synonymous." * The meaning of the name was accordingly in a transition stage when the nineteenth century opened.

Nor were the editorial duties similar to those exercised to-day. Leading articles and numberless other features of the present day journal were unknown. Nothing corresponding to a staff surrounded the editor, unless his circle of voluntary contributors deserves the title. The *Mirror Club* provided the earliest approach to the modern organisation. Frequently printer, proprietor, publisher, and editor were one and

* "Dec. of Appeals in House of Lords," IV., 393.

the same person. Nor was an elaborate management necessary. The chief and sometimes the sole equipment needed for the discharge of the editorial duties was scissors and paste. The compiler of the newspaper had to wait till the journals on which he depended reached him, for these were as indispensable to him as "exchanges" are to a back-wood's pressman of to-day, and then he plied his instruments. Magazine conductors were in the same case, with perhaps the addition of the "judicious correspondent"—that individual who, of his own free will, and for the benefit of morals and manners, sent them fine spun essays, dissertations and letters, and whom they carefully flattered even when they unwillingly consigned his contribution to oblivion (as indeed they seldom did). When Thomas Ruddiman entered into a co-partnery for the production of the *Caledonian Mercury* with his brother Walter and James Grant, Walter became the cashier for the concern and Grant undertook everything else that was necessary. His part was "to collect the foreign and domestic intelligence, to attend to the press and to publish the paper."* The duties and responsibilities of William Smellie for the *Scots Magazine* were even wider. The

* Chalmers's "Ruddiman," p. 142.

agreement between him and the owners provided that he should be the corrector of the press, that he should collect "such articles for our magazine as we shall direct," make "abstracts, extracts, or transcripts of such pieces as we may have occasion for," as well as set his hand to the compositor's stick, should the hurry of the office demand it. And all this for the princely salary of "16s. sterling weekly."*

When the press started on its course the material appearing in the journals was merely the current newsletters in type. Sometimes these were specially provided, and then the writer took on something of the shape and deportment of the special correspondent of the present day. The Civil Wars of Charles I. and the Commonwealth produced an agent that dimly foreshadowed the modern war correspondent. We can see him plodding over the roadless country or marching in the ranks of one of the opposing armies, writing his despatches when he could, and running some risk in getting them forwarded. The news gatherer of the *Scottish Mercury* of 1643 has left on record the difficulties he experienced in discharging his office. "Though it be very dirty travelling for Mercuries in the North," he said,

* Kerr's "Memoirs of William Smellie," I., 33.

"and very dangerous for surprisall, yet I got hither in cleane and whole papers, but I carried it post and in the disguise of a cavalier." Such energy and enterprise, however, were so exceptional that the rule of their absence is proved. During the 18th century the Edinburgh journals were almost parasites on the newspapers of London and the Continent. They crowded their pages with verbatim reprints from them, and some even founded their claim to popular support upon the completeness with which they transcribed and the small endeavour they made to provide first hand intelligence. Everything was admissible so long as it appeared in some accredited journal. Adam Boig of the *Courant* made open confession of the source of his news—"I own that the Forreign news was collected from other news-papers," and, he adds, "I suppose Mr. Donaldson," his rival of the *Gazette*, "has not his news from first hands more than I did." * Under the stress of competition, Donaldson did indeed attempt to distinguish between news that could be guaranteed and what was of doubtful authenticity: but in so doing he undertook an impossible task. It is to be feared that the popular desire for news was neither so developed nor extended that it was

* Maitland "Miscellany," II., 258.

particular as to its freshness, accuracy, or fullness. The demand was for these cuttings from far off newspapers, and the journals of the day provided them with apparent satisfaction to their clients and at small cost to themselves.*

It is interesting to observe the growth of space devoted to home intelligence and local news as the century progressed. When Donaldson undertook his *Gazette* this department caused him so little concern that he began publication with his plans for it utterly incomplete. He confessed that he started on a smaller scale than he had intended, and that "as yet neither hath the Publisher gotten Correspondents settled throughout the Kingdom for Intelligence." The *Courant* of 1705 made a better beginning. It was to provide news of the movements of vessels, and had arranged for correspondents in the various Scottish seaports. But these arrangements must have been of the simplest character. The *Scots Postman* of 1708 boldly announced that it intended "settling correspondence in all

* In his contest with Donaldson, Boig seems to have had at least one just cause of complaint. "All my news," he said, "comes by the common post, and I pay the postage; whereas John Bisset his conjunct gets his News by the Secretaries Pacquet free of postage, which is at least eight shillings sterling a week free gain to them."—Mait. "Misc.," II., 258.

the needful parts of the world," and probably really meant to do something in the way of gathering intelligence from the various districts of Scotland. The first Glasgow newspaper, the *Glasgow Courant* of 1715, left home intelligence pretty much to chance. In its first number it advertised that "the Gentlemen in the Towns of Aberdeen, St. Andrews, Inverness, Bricchen, Dundee, St. Johnstoun, Stirling, Dumbarton, Inveraray, Dumfries, Lanerk, Hamiltoun, Renfrew, Paisley, Port Glasgow, Greenock, Irwin, Ayr, Kilmarnock, and Stranraar are desired to send by Post any News they have, and especially Sea-port Towns to advise what ships come in or sail off from these Parts." The plan that left the providing of its columns in those days of dear postage and imperfect communication to the goodwill of its readers was not likely to be successful. An amusing example of the haphazard way in which paragraphs were obtained is to be found in the *Caledonian Mercury* of March 3, 1724. On that date the notice appeared: "We hear that my Lord Arniston one of the ordinary Lords of Session is dead." But the correspondent had been in grievous error, and in the following number the editor had to explain that "it was by mistake in our last that my Lord Arniston was dead, occasioned by the rendezvous of coaches, etc.,

hard by his Lordship's lodging, that were to attend the funeral of a son of the Right Hon., the Earl of Galloway—wherefore his Lordship and family's pardon is humbly craved."

The post from London necessarily played an important part in the weekly life of an Edinburgh journal, for with it came the raw material in the shape of the metropolitan newspapers from which the local prints were manufactured. The days on which they arrived determined the day of publication. Donaldson put in the forefront of his programme that he would have everything so in readiness in his office, awaiting the mails, that his *Gazette* would be issued "within 4 or 5 hours after the Post arriveth." It needs little imagination to picture the scene of bustle and hurry to have the number out before some stray copy of Ridpath's *Flying Post* or some other journal spread valuable news abroad, and so destroyed the market for the home production. In later days, perhaps even more expedition was necessary when two Richmonds were in the field. The casual purchaser would invest in the journal that came first to his hand. The necessary competition even gave rise to ingenious plans to anticipate rivals. It is stated that the proprietor of the *Edinburgh Chronicle* (1759) "used to ride to Leith, intercept the London mail, and return in

haste to the city by a shorter route, in order to forestall his contemporaries." *

When so much depended on the English mails, calamities to them spread consternation through the Edinburgh printing offices. A snow-storm in the Cheviots or a highwayman's raid on the coach as it passed over some Yorkshire or Lancashire moor probably meant a newsless Edinburgh. The *Evening Courant* had sadly to inform its clientele one morning in February, 1721, that "Since our last, we have received no mail from London, but instead of that which should have come in yesterday, we had our own mail of Thursday last returned: and it's presumed that the London mail which we should have had (by oversight of some of the post offices on the road) is sent back to London." Seven years later, the same journal had to explain that "The London post came not in till this day, being Friday 'twixt 9 and 10 forenoon, which stop't our publishing on Thursday as usual."

In 1763 the increase of the number of mails from London to five per week gave Alexander Donaldson the chance of starting the *Edinburgh Advertiser*. As if there was nothing extraordinary or unusual in the fact, he names the days on which, according to the new arrange-

* Reid's "New Lights on Old Edinburgh," p. 77.

ments, mails were due, and adds "on all of which days newspapers may be received from the metropolis," the inference being that ample material would be provided for the new journal. For long years subsequently Thursday was a *dies non* for a newspaper, because no post reached the capital on that day. Encouraged by the success of the *Caledonian Mercury*, its proprietor at midsummer 1776 attempted the publication of what was really a daily paper—the first of its kind in Scotland. He continued to issue the *Mercury* on its stated days, and on the remaining days of the week published the *Caledonian Gazetteer*—a journal that followed its parent paper in style and contents. The project was carried on for a month, and was then dropped. For another two months the *Mercury* appeared five times a week. The day omitted was Thursday, the only day on which no post arrived from London, which the proprietor described as "the great source of intelligence at present."

A deepening interest in local affairs is increasingly obvious as the century nears its close. An official who somewhat resembled the modern reporter came into existence. In 1774 mention is made of "the collector of news for the *Caledonian Mercury*, George Reid by name." *

* "The Lyon in Mourning," III., 298.

It is difficult to convey an accurate conception of the growth of this desire to know the events of the neighbourhood, but the following table will give an indication. The first four consecutive numbers for the month of September were taken of the *Caledonian Mercury* for 1720, and of the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* for 1762 and 1794. A rough calculation of the space devoted to the various classes of printed matter yielded these results:—

	1720.	1762.	1794.
Essays, letters, etc., - ...	...	$5\frac{5}{6}$	$2\frac{5}{6}$
Scottish items, - - ...	...	2	$13\frac{2}{3}$
English and Foreign do.,	$17\frac{1}{2}$	$19\frac{1}{6}$	$26\frac{2}{3}$
Advertisements, - -	$4\frac{1}{2}$	21	$20\frac{5}{6}$
	22 pp.	48 cols.	64 cols.

The earlier years of the *Edinburgh Gazette* of 1699 would have yielded more space to Scottish matters than is credited to the *Mercury* of 1720, while probably another month of 1794 would have produced a smaller proportion of Scottish news than appears above for that year. As it happened the journals of September, 1794, gave long accounts of one of the sedition trials, that were not infrequent at that epoch.

XI.—THE DISTRIBUTION OF EDINBURGH PERIODICALS.

COPIES of the Edinburgh journals could always be obtained at the printing houses where they were produced, and many of the papers bore intimations to that effect. Sometimes the printer, as in the case of James Watson, had also a shop where customers might call for the numbers as they were issued. Little or no effort was made at first to send out the papers to the residences of subscribers: the limited size of the city perhaps rendering such a labour unnecessary. When the practice did begin a correspondingly higher charge was made for the print. In the case of some of the better known journals, a compromise was in later days effected by the selection of one or two bookshops in the main street or in the better known closes as places where copies could be purchased. As a rule, however, the printing house and the shop of the publisher, if printer and publisher were different, were for long years the chief, if not the only, places where any particular paper could be obtained. In the second number of the *Mirror*, Henry Mackenzie draws a delightful picture of what such a shop would be like

on the day a well-known periodical issued its regular number.

In the absence, then, of what would now be called "newsagents," proprietors of newspapers and magazines had to make their own arrangements. To what these grew as the century closed may be gathered from the notice published in the *Scots Chronicle* in the course of 1796. Papers were to be delivered to "subscribers only from the door in Murdoch's Close at and after 2 o'clock, and to non-subscribers from the door in Toderie's Wynd at or after 3 o'clock every Tuesday and Friday: the carriers with the papers for subscribers who choose to have them sent to their houses in Edinburgh and Leith will be regularly dispatched from the office at half-past one o'clock. To prevent inconvenient crowding at the doors by non-subscribers, quantities of papers will be left for their accommodation at the shops of Messrs Berry and Elder, South and North Bridge Street at 3 o'clock." The intimation adds the significant notice that "the entries and stairs will be well lighted in the evenings."

As the postal arrangements of the country gradually became more perfect, they were of necessity largely taken advantage of for distributing copies of the Edinburgh papers far beyond the confines of the city. Private cou-

tracts were made between readers and the Edinburgh postmaster for duly forwarding the numbers as they appeared.* One such agreement reads as follows:—

“I, Alex. Smith, postmaster generall of this Kingdom, doe hereby oblidge myselfe to send to Mr. Archibald Dunbarr of Thundertown, ane *Flying Post*† and *Edinburgh Gazette* twice a week from the date hereof till Candlemass one thousand seven hundred and one years. In witness whereof I have written and subscribed ther presents with my hand at Edinburgh the nyinth day of December, 1700.”‡

The postmaster was evidently open to drive a good bargain for himself in this distribution.

* Under minute of August 27, 1701, the Edinburgh Town Council order their Chamberlain to pay Alexander Smith, Keeper of the General Post Office, “for gazets and others furnished by him to the good toun,” from the 11th November, 1699, to the 11th November, 1701, the sum of £97 15s. These would probably be papers published outside of the city.

† Probably Ridpath’s London journal, which had a good circulation in Scotland.

‡ Dunbar’s “Social Life in Former Days,” p. 33.

Before 1705 he had been in the habit of taking the *Gazette* and sending it to customers. But in that year Boig of the *Courant* offered him better terms, with the result that Donaldson had sorrowfully to record of him that "he used to take a parcel of *Gazettes* weekly,"* an arrangement that was now a thing of the past.

Numerous complaints, however, were made that the post office frequently failed to deliver what was consigned to it, and over and over again notices from the conductors appeared in the journals disclaiming responsibility for the disappointment to which their subscribers were subjected. A typical example of the deficiency of the postal service is found in the letter which Rev. Lauchlin Shaw sent to Archibald Dunbar of Newtown from Elgin on June 6, 1746. He had evidently ordered the Edinburgh journals, for he said—"I have written to Aberdeen for this year's magazines but have not as yet got them: their posts go no further than to Dundee, and they cannot get home books or pamphlets but by carriers, who are not frequent."† Copies of the Edinburgh journals, however, found their way to the most remote localities. After wandering about the rugged Highlands for

* Maitland "Miscellany," II., 252.

† Dunbar's "Social Life," p. 378.

weeks, Boswell tells of the joys he felt when he discovered some numbers of the *Caledonian Mercury* on the sequestered island of Inch Kenneth, off the western shore of Mull. "I read," he says, "with that pleasure which every man feels who has been for some time secluded from the animated scenes of the busy world."*

Between the high prices paid for the papers themselves and the postal charges, even well-to-do people found difficulty in regularly subscribing to a paper. The case was frequently met by various households combining and sharing the expense of both the paper and its postage. In other instances, the condition was that the journal should be returned within a certain time—as is apparent from a MS. note which appears on a copy of the *Advertiser* for January 3, 1786:—"Gentlemen—the newspapers must be kept clean, and read as soon as possible for they are to be returned to Edinburgh or we are to have no more of them."

The first coffee house is said to have been set up in Edinburgh in 1673. Such houses soon became the centre of the gossip and news of the city, and when a burgher could not afford to have a paper or magazine for his own exclusive use, he could usually find what he wanted in

* "Tour to the Highlands," October 17, 1773.

their hospitable rooms. Newspaper proprietors even occasionally guaranteed the accuracy of the contents of their journal by referring to the originals that lay at the Caledona or other coffee-house. As may readily be understood these coffee houses and other public places of resort were not always looked on favourably by the authorities. In May, 1692, William Murray was brought before the Privy Council on the charge of allowing news letters containing false news to be read in his tavern in the Canongate. In November of the same year the Council ordered the magistrates of Edinburgh to shut up the Exchange Coffee House and bring them the keys "in respect of the seditious news vented in and dispersed from the said coffee house."* Another kind of centre was inaugurated in 1726 when Allan Ramsay began his circulating library in the Luckenbooths, the first of its kind to be established in Scotland. The idea was caught up, and several booksellers followed his example and even extended its usefulness. Thus in 1758 William Gray advertises that "at his circulating library in the front of the east wing of the Exchange" he intends in future to have six of the London magazines and

* Privy Council Register, quoted in Chambers's "Domestic Annals of Scotland," III., 72.

three of its newspapers ready for the perusal of the citizens who were willing to pay 2s. per quarter for the privilege. Doubtless the Edinburgh journals would also lie upon his tables. In 1799 C. Elliot, who had come into possession of what remained of Allan Ramsay's library, makes it known that at his rooms at the Cross magazines and reviews can be seen, "including nearly one hundred newspapers weekly, some of which are carefully preserved, but the greater part is sold at low prices second hand." The burgher of Edinburgh with average means at his disposal could have no difficulty in obtaining sight of even the high priced periodicals of the close of the 18th century.

XII.—THE PAPER CRIERS.

PERHAPS the quickest method of conveying papers to the hands of readers was by means of the street paper criers. These were men who eked out a miscellaneous means of livelihood by hawking pamphlets, newspapers, and ephemeral prints of all kinds in the usual places of resort, in addition to being public carriers and errand-goers. They had an extensive and intimate knowledge of the old city, and were too frequently both the scandal and the necessity of the streets.* Besides being the sellers of newspapers, the caddies, as they were usually called, were news-providers and gossip-mongers on their own account. "We sometimes wonder," says Chambers, "how our ancestors did without newspapers. We do not reflect on the living vehicles of news which then existed: the privileged beggar for the country people—for townsfolk, the caddies." †

* Sir Walter Scott gives an example of their utility in "Guy Mannering," chap. 37. Cf. also Burt's "Letters," I, 21, and Topham's "Letters from Edinburgh," p. 81.

† "Traditions of Edinburgh," p. 194.

That the paper criers were not without a certain adventitious influence upon the fortunes of the press is shown by the prominent place they occupied in regard to it about the beginning of the eighteenth century. In the conflict of interests which broke out between James Donaldson of the *Gazette* and Adam Boig of the *Courant* in 1705, they took the latter's side. Donaldson more than hinted that his rival succeeded in gaining over the criers to his side by giving them more favourable terms. Their desertion of him, whatever was the reason, cost the *Gazette* its life for the time being. He says that they took such "pains to sell the said *Courant* and to do their utmost to hinder the *Gazette* that the latter had to be laid aside as a thing that cannot be profitably carried on." * It is probable, however, that the caddies soon became reconciled to Donaldson, for the *Edinburgh Gazette* of August 15, 1706, contains an advertisement from an agent who offered to provide criers for its sale—"Whoever wants the *Gazette* or any other paper sold on the streets," it runs, "may be furnished therewith by David Buttle, paper cryer, within the Head of Bell's Wynd foregainst the entry to the back thereof."

* Maitland "Miscellany," II., 252.

Just as the seventeenth century was closing,* the Town Council took the unusual course of incorporating the news criers into a society, with a constitution that made it a kind of benefit society. The number of members was limited to twenty. "Rules and Regulations," † which included in their scope link carriers and sellers of roses, were issued for the conduct of the members on the street. Particular emphasis is laid in these upon character. The Council was urgent at the time about profanity, and members of the society were forbidden to curse or swear—an unseemly specimen of the vetoed language being actually provided that there might be no mistake. It was made compulsory that all members go to church every Sunday and "to school one diet every week day." Brawling, keeping loose company, drinking or gambling was to result in the loss of privilege. Rule 7 provided that the criers have "decent apparel and an honest lodging house." Membership was to cease if any one "does not pay for what books or papers he gets on trust twenty-four hours after sale." Authorised news criers were

* Unfortunately, the date seems irrecoverable from the Records.

† A single folio sheet without date.

to be identified by a badge. "The Badge to be worn by each of the said Societie is apointed to be a kind of Apron of Blew Linnen, made in the Form of a Bag, which none may len'd one pain of loseing his priviledge." Elaborate precautions were taken for the apprehension of any who infringed the rights of the Society or of any of the company itself who might prove delinquents. One person was selected for supervising the whole, "and for this present year to August, 1700, James Donaldson, publisher of the *Gazette*, who is also hereby authorised to take inspection of the said companie, and during the Council's pleasure to see the whole rules and orders above mentioned duely observed and punctualie put in execution in every point and article and with the consent of any of the Bailies to add any other Rule or Order which shall seem necessary." *

The news criers, however, did not rise to the height of their opportunities. They became a nuisance ere ten years had passed away, and the printers of the city united in a common protest against them. They complained to the Town

* A copy of the Rules appears in Maitland's "History of Edinburgh," as they were modified in 1714 (p. 326). Maitland is in error in giving this date as the date of first issue.

Council of "their scandalous livings and impossings upon them,"* and the Council having been convinced that "many wicked and debauched practises [were] proven against them," unanimously dissolved the society on September 6, 1710. At the same time the authorities made provision for the due sale of newspapers on the streets. They licensed all persons who were willing to give their "bond and caution to the clerks for their faithful, civil and Christian deportment and for the observing the rules and instructions given or that shall be given by the Magistrates for the time being." A license form was duly made out, and appeared on a single sheet folio—a somewhat awkward size if the document had to be carried on the person of the news crier. It ran thus, being headed with the city arms—

"Edinburgh.....

These are to certify and declare to all persons concerned
That the Bearer hereof.....
has given bond and caution in the Terms of the Act of
the Town Council of the Date the 6th of September,
1710 Years, for his Liberty of Crying of Papers within
the City of Edinburgh, Liberty and Privileges thereof;
and it is attested by"

.....

* Town Council Minutes, September 6, 1710.

To make the license effective the Council also laid down rules for the suppression of unauthorised news sellers. "All who shall presume," says the Act, "to cry papers without these certificates, they shall be apprehended and punished be the Magistrates as they shall see cause. And for the more effectual punishing such transgressors the Council authorise and appoint James Wardlaw, stationer burges of this city, to see the premises observed and to cause apprehend the transgressors and putt them in the Guard until they be examined be the Magistrates and punished for their transgression, and further the Council appoint the Constables, officers and souldiers of the City Guard to concurr with the said James Wardlaw in apprehending these transgressors and putt them in to the guard to the effect foresaid."

This arrangement seems to have held good till 1759. On February 7 of that year the Town Council again had to consider complaints as to the behaviour of the caddies. Finding that these complaints were well founded, the Council remitted the whole matter to the Magistrates for consideration. At the next meeting, February 14, the Magistrates unanimously recommended that the caddies be erected into a society during the pleasure of the Council—thus falling back on a plan which had failed before. Regulations

for the society were at the same time suggested, and from subsequent events, it is certain that the incorporation actually took place.* By 1770, however, doubts had arisen as to the exact constitution and powers of the society, and on their own petition the Council ordered the reconsideration of their whole situation. The result was that a new deed was granted them on January 23, 1771, under the title of "The Running Stationers of Edinburgh." †

There is evidence that the name is not used for the first time, but it indicates that paper-crying was now considered the chief occupation of the caddies. Their rights in the matter were settled by the eighth provision of the new charter—"The Society shall have the sole priviledge of disperceing and crying Ballads and other periodical performances, with power to the preses to cause take up any other person or persons useing that priviledge, and as constable to commit such person or persons to the City Guard to be examined by the Magistrate." To this was added the further privilege of errand-going and chair-bearing so long as the common rights of others were not infringed.

* The operative printers of Edinburgh were similarly incorporated in 1758.

† The deed is in the Municipal Museum.

The days were not, however, far distant when the caddies had to pass as an institution that had outlived its usefulness. In 1806 Stark notes that they had given up the crying of papers and "are now only remarkable as errand men." * Later still the society itself suffered dissolution, and the highly painted metal money box in which the subscriptions of the incorporation were deposited recently reached the Municipal Museum by way of a city pawnshop!

* "Picture of Edinburgh," p. 440.

XIII.—THE PERIODICAL ESSAY.

THE form of literary effort, known as the Essay, had not been wanting in Scotland before the Union of 1707. It had been practised by, among others, William Alexander, Earl of Stirling, and Drummond of Hawthornden. The commotions of the seventeenth century, however, had made the pursuit of it, as of almost every form of literature, an impossibility, and practically nothing of value had been written.

In the spring of 1709 the essay started on a new lease of life. When this species of composition had been given to the public hitherto it was in the ordinary volume form. In that year Steele, with the help of Addison, created the periodical essay. Necessarily the change modified the character of the composition somewhat. Besides the definite sequence, it was found convenient to issue the numbers anonymously, although the authorship was allowed to leak out after a reasonable interval. The subject matter had also to be somewhat different. Reference to contemporary conditions and events was advisable in at least some of the numbers. Steele accordingly "treated of everything that

was going on in the world. He paints as a social humourist the whole age of Queen Anne—the political and literary disputes, the fine gentlemen and ladies, the characters of men, the humours of society, the new book, the new play; we live in the very streets and drawing-rooms of old London.” Steele began with the *Tatler*, the first number of which was published on April 12, 1709. It was printed in one folio sheet of “tobacco paper” with “scurvy letter,” and took the public by storm as the issue advanced. At first it was partly a newspaper. The editor’s own account of the contents of his periodical was as follows: “All accounts of gallantry, pleasure and entertainment shall be under the article of White’s Chocolate House; poetry under that of Will’s Coffee House; learning under the title of Grecian; foreign and domestic news you will have from St. James’s Coffee House; and what else I shall on any other subject offer shall be dated from my own compartment.” The political news gradually disappeared.

The sheets of the *Tatler* and its successors found their way to Scotland and were seized upon with remarkable avidity. There was a widespread recognition of the literary poverty of the country, and, as shall be shown, their advent intensified the knowledge. But if the

Scots were not producing literature, their taste for it was not dead. The reception the numbers got suggested to that enterprising printer, James Watson, that their reproduction would be greeted with applause. He accordingly undertook the reprinting of the *Tatler* itself some months after its start, and followed the manner of the original in making it periodical, although the essays were also at the same time published in Edinburgh in volume form in more than one edition. No question of copyright intervened to forbid the practice, and the *Examiner* and the *Freeholder* were likewise reproduced in the Scottish capital. It is somewhat astonishing that no trace has been discovered of the reprinting of the more famous *Spectator* in periodical form.

Lord Woodhouselee has occasion to lament that in the "proper province of polite literature" Scotland had "no conspicuous figure" at the beginning of the eighteenth century. He finds, however, that the coming north of these publications had a most potent effect on the literary outlook, and served to stir up literary activity. "A taste for polite literature," he says when speaking of a later day, "had begun gradually to diffuse itself in Scotland even from the time of the publication of the *Tatlers*, *Spectators*, and *Guardians*, and as in England the effect of those writings, and more particularly of the papers

of Addison, was conspicuous in substituting an ease and elegance of composition as a more engaging vehicle for subjects of taste, in the room of the dry, scholastic style in which they had hitherto been treated. So in Scotland the attention of our youth, fresh from their academicall studies, which yet retained a strong tincture of the ancient school dialectics, was attracted to the more pleasing topics of criticism and belles lettres. The cultivation of style became an object of study, and in a few attempts at that lighter species of essay writing of which Addison had furnished a model, we see the dawning of a better taste in composition than had hitherto appeared in any publication from the Scottish press." *

The interest of Edinburgh in the new form of essay did not confine itself to mere reprinting of what had already been published in England. Both the essay itself and the manner of its publication were imitated. The cult of the *Tatler* grew. We have no surviving copies of the first of these Edinburgh imitations—the *Northern Tatler*, which began issue on March 27, 1710—and so cannot determine how closely its Scottish writers followed their model. But Steele remained the inspiration for some time.

* "Life of Kames," I., 164.

Even while other writers entered the field and did splendid work, confession of his influence was frequent. As late as the year 1717 the publication of the *Mercury or Northern Reformer* was after his example, the editor concealing his identity under the pseudonym of "Duncan Tatler," and describing himself as likely to be the last of his race. Perhaps the most famous of these attempts, as well as the most creditable, was the *Edinburgh Tatler* of 1711. It began ten days after the stoppage of Steele's periodical, and was the work of Robert Hepburn of Bearford, an advocate of some ability. Though it did not survive long, it showed distinct originality, and might have longer occupied the field had it not been characterised by a certain asperity of tone.

That these efforts argued a real determination after literary culture is perfectly obvious to Lord Woodhouselee. "These attempts at periodical essay writing," he said, "which I have noticed as the first indications of attention to style were made by a few young men of good education belonging probably both to the church and bar who had formed societies or clubs for literary conversation and improvement in composition." * Even although there was some-

* *Ibid.*, I., 174.

thing artificial both in the form and subject-matter of their efforts, the exercise did these literary aspirants good, and helped to keep alive a love for pure letters.

For the remainder of the century the essay fully maintained its place. Sometimes the method of publication followed precisely the manner of the prototypes, and the periodicals dissociated themselves from news: as did the *Mirror* and the *Lounger* which, many years after its disappearance, took the *Spectator* as their model. Occasionally the numbers were professedly the report of the meetings of certain literary, political or philosophical organisations—like the *Letters of the Critical Club*. Much reliance was often placed upon the letters with which correspondents favoured the editor, and a periodical was sometimes nothing more than the running commentaries week by week on what might find itself in the editor's bag. When two journals of the same kind happened to be contemporaneous, the writers might descend to personal abuse, as took place in the case of the *Ghost* and the *Trifler*. Occasionally a volume of essays was published whose first appearance was meant to be periodical. Thus an anonymous author in 1741 prefaces his work with the words: "Most of these essays were wrote with a view of being published as weekly papers, and

were intended to comprehend the designs both of the *Spectator* and the *Craftsman*. But having dropt that undertaking partly from laziness, partly from want of leisure, and being willing to make trial of my talents for writing before I venture upon any more serious composition, I was induced to commit these trifles to the judgment of the public." * As the century closed there grew up a kind of tradition that these essay periodicals should not extend beyond a certain number of issues. When they reached the bulk of what would make a fairly sized volume, they were dropped. The practice was a commendable one. It frequently saved the editor from the reputation of having incurred a more dreadful fate.

Essay-writing, however, was not confined to periodicals that were exclusively set apart for them. The reading public showed such an insatiable craving for them that they had to find a place in almost every journal that came from the press. In announcing its plans, the *Edinburgh Advertiser* of 1764 made provision for their inclusion, although it was primarily a

* "Essays Moral and Spiritual." Edinburgh: Printed by R. Fleming and A. Alison for A. Kincaid, and sold at his shop above the Cross. MDCCXLI. 12 mo., 187 pp. [B].

newspaper, on the ground that the essay was "an article of entertainment for which there is so large a demand." There seemed to be something more than ordinarily attractive in the sententious manner in which the writers expressed themselves, in the belief that readers and writers alike were participants in polite literature, and in the vain delusion that morals and manners were in a fair way to be reformed by such compositions. A kind of phraseology grew up and words like "courteous," "gentle," "ingenious," "polite," "gentlemen of taste," were liberally employed, no doubt to the entire satisfaction of publisher, writer, and reader.

Newspapers had an early claim made upon them for space. As far back as 1714 the *Edinburgh Gazette* gave notice that "when the news are barron" the author had determined "to cause print and publish in my prints some other things tending to the benefit of the publick," and these proved to be papers of the essay type. Several newspapers were built on the principle that definite and adequate space in each issue should be set apart for them. The *Echo* of 1729 had the essay department apparently under separate management, and the *Edinburgh Chronicle* of 1759 advertised all and sundry that "ingenious essays on all subjects will readily find a place" in its pages. The

fashion was continued, and to the practice may be traced the occurrence of contributions of the essay type even in the newspapers of to-day.

When magazines entered on their career, the essay found a natural and convenient outlet into print. The *Scots Magazine* devoted much space to them, printing both original and selected essays. In its character of a bee finding honey in every flower and storing it in its pages, it gathered the choicest efforts of the English essayists into its issues. In this way the *Rambler** and other periodicals were largely reprinted in Edinburgh soon after their issue in the south. So natural did this course of action appear that the proprietors of the *Scots Magazine* seem to have committed no offence in reprinting in its pages at the first possible

* Johnson's *Rambler* appeared from the press of Sands, Murray & Cochran, even while the serial issue was still running in London. A volume was made up as soon as sufficient material came to hand. Altogether eight volumes were published, either singly or in pairs. Boswell says of the edition that "it is, unquestionably, the most accurate and beautiful edition of this work: and there being but a small impression it is now become scarce and sells at a very high price." The *Scots Magazine* reproduced No. 14 of the *Rambler* as its own preface for the yearly volume for 1750. The English periodical was largely printed throughout the volume itself.

opportunity the numbers of the *Mirror* and the *Lounger* as they were published. The various magazines that were enticed into publication through the success of the *Scots Magazine* followed its example both in giving prominence to essays and in its freedom of appropriation. The *Edinburgh Magazines* of 1759, 1773, and 1785 all gave space willingly. Such a paper as the *Gentleman and Lady's Weekly Magazine* of 1774 made its appeal to the public because of them, and its method was followed by several others.

As has been indicated, there was a good deal of conscious effort in all this devotion to the periodical essay as an exponent of pure literature. Its cultivation was recognised as one of the means towards raising Scotland to a higher literary level among the nations. Those who published the *Edinburgh Review* of 1755 deliberately placed this purpose before them, and gave pointed expression to it in their first number. There was a good market for such literary wares in the city. Lockhart said he did not know of any place, not a seat of government or a centre of some political interest, where books were more eagerly bought, but whose booksellers at the same time showed more timidity in undertaking publication on their own account. They were contented to be "a very

humble appendage of understrappers to the trade of the Row" in London. The essay alone seemed to be able to stir them up to independent action. "The only thing," he says, "that could be looked upon as any invasion of this quiescent state of matters was the appearance of the *Mirrors* and some other works in the same style or by the same hands, which were published in the shop of Mr. Creech, then the Prince of the Edinburgh trade, and which of course must have attracted no inconsiderable share of attention to him and his shop." *

The precise part these essays played in the origins of the literary revival that came to Edinburgh at the beginning of the nineteenth century it will be difficult to determine, but the love of them continued alongside of it. The essay periodical, modified no doubt as to its form, persisted in appearance and related itself to names that were well known in the literary world. Examples can be found in the *Spy* (1810) of the Ettrick Shepherd and the *Saleroom* (1817) in which Sir Walter Scott had his share.

* "Peter's Letters to His Kinsfolk," II., 158.

XIV.—MISCELLANY.

1. THE FIRST ADVERTISEMENT.—The earliest Scottish advertisement that has been discovered occurs in the *Mercurius Scoticus*. It is to be found in No. 19, of date “From Tuesday, December 2, to Tuesday, December 9, 1651,” and is as follows:—

“There is a Book lately come forth
Intituled The Dead Man’s Testament,
Written to all the Godly in Scotland by
Thomas Wood sometimes Inhabitant in
Leith.”

It is the only advertisement in the surviving numbers of the journal, and it is specially interesting that it should refer to a book. The volume was printed by Evan Tyler, and a copy is to be found in the Advocates’ Library.

2. THE RELATIONS BETWEEN NEWSPAPER PROPRIETORS.—The competition which must necessarily have existed between the newspapers of Edinburgh in the eighteenth century does not appear to have destroyed good relations between them. That the proprietors lived in amity together is shown by several facts. The following will suffice.

In July, 1768, they came to an agreement that credit for advertisements should no longer be allowed, and they issued a joint notice to this effect signed by

Wal. Ruddiman & Co. (*Cale. Mercury*).

Auld & Smellie (*Weekly Journal*).

Alexander Donaldson (*Advertiser*).

Robert Fleming & Co. (*Courant*).

In 1780 the case of the Solicitors at law *versus* Robertson came before the Supreme Courts. The case papers are preserved in the Campbell Collection. The margins contain numerous annotations by counsel, one of which refers to a certain list of names. The manuscript is as follows: "This list was printed with the same type in all three [news] papers, viz., those of the *Courant* who first inserted it, for, to let the public into a secret, the publishers of these three papers are on such a foot with one another that they borrow and lend with their neighbour the types of advertisements, especially long ones, in order to save time and trouble."

3. THE STAMPING OF SCOTTISH PAPERS.—As is shown in the accounts of the papers themselves, the whole incidence of the stamp duties was felt to be a grievous burden, and numerous unsuccessful attempts were made to evade pay-

ment. Occasionally the tax enabled native productions to score a triumph over papers that might be imported from south of the border. But the balance of grievance remained more pronounced in Scotland. All the stamped paper required by the northern printers had to be imported from London, with effects that oftentimes were disastrous. The editors might announce improvements in the *format* or size of their journal: the fulfilment of their promise would depend on the stock of paper at the Stamp Office. Occasionally the supply of paper ran done altogether.

And there were other sides to the grievance. It was an injury done to the Scottish industry of paper-making, besides being an offence to the national spirit. On September 15, 1785, a meeting of all who in any way used stamped paper was convened in the Parliament House of Edinburgh to protest against the hardship and to demand that a stamping office be set up in the city.* Nothing, however, came of the movement. Four years later the Chamber of Commerce took the matter in hand and drew up a report on it which covers five columns of the *Scots Magazine*.† Again the cause of com-

* *Scots Magazine*, XLVII., 464.

† *Ibid.*, LI., 470.

plaint was set forth. It was found that newspapers had even come under a new disability. In the preceeding session of Parliament legislation had been carried, which enacted that "the privilege of returning unsold or damaged papers should be withdrawn, but that a compensation of four per cent. on stamps purchased was to be given in lieu of it." The report pointed out that "by the wording of the act the compensation is confined to London, which on account of the distance and the bulkiness of the article amounts to a prohibition in Edinburgh." That the grievance was a real one is shown by the fact that the average annual outlay on the carriage of the paper amounted to £400, and that the paper itself was oftentimes almost too bad for use. That the Government stinginess was without excuse is proved by the return of stamp duty for the year ending August 2, 1789. The Scottish newspapers alone, not to speak of other forms of the stamp, used 13,392,103 stamps, which, at a tax of 1½d, yielded £83,700 12s 11d. The main reason of the Government, however, for maintaining the existing arrangement was the expense which a separate establishment would involve, and although the report was placed in the hands of Henry Dundas again the grievance remained unredressed.

Writing under 1791 Creech said that the plan cost the Government £700 per annum because of the increase in the use made of the paper, and denounced this "when it could be stamped in Edinburgh for a trifle, and the manufacture of paper thereby greatly encouraged. The present mode appears to be neither just nor politic. By the articles of Union Scotland is entitled to have a board of stamps."*

The grievance was one that took long to remove, and it was not till June 20, 1828, that an order came from the Treasury to the Commissioners of Stamps "to cause all the paper for Scotch newspapers to be stamped at the Head Office in Edinburgh." This boon was conferred only after a vigorous agitation carried on from Glasgow.

4. THE NUMBER OF PERIODICALS AT SPECIFIC DATES.—The following references will be helpful in determining what periodicals existed in Edinburgh at given dates. Those of 1768 have already been indicated.

1763.—"There were two newspapers printing in very small folio and the advertisements in each were from ten to twenty."†

* "Fugitive Pieces," p. 81.

† Ibid., p. 76.

Creech evidently does not mean this number to be inclusive of all the papers published in that year in Edinburgh, for he does not seem to remember the *Weekly Journal*.

1780.—The *Pocket Register* of July 27, 1780, says:—"Within these twelve months past no fewer than two new papers have appeared upon the literary field and stood candidates for public favour along with the other four." The four were the *Courant*, *Caledonian Mercury*, *Advertiser*, and *Ruddiman's Weekly Mercury*, while the new ventures were the *Evening Post* and the *Gazette*.

1790.—"There were four established newspapers, and in 1792 six newspapers. The size of the paper is as large as any of the kind in Britain and the advertisements in some of them are from 60 to 100; sometimes more notwithstanding a heavy and increased duty on the paper and advertisements." * In December, 1792, the papers were the *Courant*, *Mercury*, *Advertiser*, *Herald*, *Caledonian Chronicle*, and the *Gazetteer*.

* Creech's "Fugitive Pieces," p. 76.

1792.—The *Political Review* of June 20, 1792, names all the periodicals published in Edinburgh at that date. It gives four newspapers—*Mercury*, *Courant*, *Advertiser*, and *Herald*; two monthly magazines—the *Scots* and the *Edinburgh*; and in addition describes the *Historical Register*, the *Historical Intelligencer*, the *Bee*, and the *Constitutional Letters*—ten in all.

1793.—Chalmers gives a list of “Newspapers published in Scotland during the year 1793.” * Those for Edinburgh are:—

Edinburgh Evening Courant, David Ramsay—Monday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Caledonian Mercury, Robert Allan—Monday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Edinburgh Gazette—Twice a week.

Edinburgh Gazetteer, William Johnston—Twice a week.

Edinburgh Advertiser, James Donaldson—Tuesday and Friday.

* “Life of Ruddiman,” p. 441.

Edinburgh Herald, Stewart, Ruthven & Co.—Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Edinburgh Caledonian Chronicle, James Robertson—Twice a week.

5. STILL EXISTING EIGHTEENTH CENTURY PERIODICALS.—Of all the periodicals that began publication before 1800 only three have contrived to maintain issue up to the present. The *Medical and Philosophical Commentaries* of 1773 were not perhaps periodicals in the usual sense, but they did appear at regular intervals, and ultimately fell into the regular line of magazine publication in the *Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal* of 1805. This paper is still represented in the *Edinburgh Medical Journal*—the periodical that has the longest pedigree of all the journals now appearing in the Capital. The *Edinburgh Gazette* of 1792 alone has retained its original name, and still appears in a shape and with contents little removed from its first issue. There is every probability that it will remain the same for centuries to come. The present *Congregational Magazine* can trace its ancestry back to the *Missionary Magazine* of 1796 in an uninterrupted line. But these are all that have survived the

lapse of time. Several attained to a good old age, like the *Caledonian Mercury* and the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*. The former may still be said to live in the *Scotsman*. One magazine succeeded in bridging the nineteenth century—the *Christian Magazine* of 1797—only to perish, after many transmigrations, in the demise of the *Union Magazine* in 1904. Hugh Miller's saying that the journalist writes on the sand with the tide coming in is true in several ways.

6. NUMBER OF ADVERTISEMENTS AT CERTAIN DATES.—Much information regarding the early circulation of 18th century newspapers might have been derived from the books kept at the Stamp Office, but all the documents relating to the collection of the duty were destroyed as useless lumber some years ago. The following tables of the number of advertisements on which duty was paid in the journals named were copied before that disaster befell them:—

		For Quarter ending Nov. 2, 1785.	For Sept., 1776.	For Sept., 1777.	For Feb., 1779.
<i>Courant</i> , -	-	1993	317	351	523
<i>Mercury</i> , -	-	1819	318	341	608
<i>Advertiser</i> ,	-	1450	241	313	454
<i>Weekly Mercury</i> ,	...		33	36	66

	June, 1800.	January, 1801.
<i>Courant</i> , - - - - -	810	1035
<i>Mercury</i> , - - - - -	661	884
<i>Advertiser</i> , - - - - -	619	773
<i>Herald</i> , - - - - -	198	264
<i>Gazette</i> , - - - - -	59	85
<i>Scots Chronicle</i> , - - - - -	24	47
<i>Weekly Journal</i> , - - - - -	71	107
<i>Wednesday Packet</i> , - - - - -	19	35

Advertisements in Scottish newspapers for
quarter ending August:—

	1800.	1801.	1802.
Edinburgh, - - - - -	8001	8819	9587
Glasgow, - - - - -	2935	4143	3425
Aberdeen, - - - - -	574	643	712
Dumfries, - - - - -	369	403	421*

* For these tables the author is indebted to Mr. James Wilkie, Edinburgh, who was allowed to make some extracts from the books before they were destroyed.

II.
BIBLIOGRAPHY.

PART I.—1642-1711.



THE
DIURNAL
OCCVRRANCES.

Touching the dayly Proceedings in
Parliament, from the 27. of December, to
the third of January, 1641.

With the Lord Mayor's going to his Maieslie about the
rising of the Apprentices concerning Colonel Luciford; who
was thereupon displaced from his Lieutenantship of the
Tower, and Sir John Biron placed in his Room.

As also the sending away of certaine Provision, and
Troupes of Horsemen, for the Reliefe of the distressed Protestants
in Ireland with his Majesties Royall feasting of the chiefe
Commanders that went thither; And a Rela-
tion of an Overthrow the Rebels have
lately received in Ireland.

Together with the Fyre and Tumult of the Citizens and
Apprentices of London, concerning the Bishops; and that twelve
of them are suspended from the High Court of Parliament and
charged with High Treason; the Bish. of York, and
eight more, being committed to the Tower, the
Bishops of Peterborough and Duresme
to the Black Rod and the Bish. of
Landaffe cannot be
found.

LONDON.
Printed for Iohn Mareschal, 1641

The London Originall of the First Scottish Periodical.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

1642-1711.

1642.—The Diurnal Occurrances, Touching the dailie proceedings in Parliament, from the 27 of December to the third of Januarie, 1642.

“With the Lord Mayor’s going to his Majestie about the rising of the Apprentices concerning Colonel Lunsford; who was thereupon displaced from his Lieutenantship of the Tower, and Sir John Biron placed in his Roome.

“As also the sending away of certain Provision and Troupes of Horsemen for the reliefe of the distressed Protestants in Ireland, with his Majesties Royal feasting of the chief Commanders that went thither; And a Relation of an Overthrow the Rebels have lately received in Ireland.

“Together with the Uprere and Tumult of the Citizens and Apprentices of London concerning the Bishops, and that twelve of them are suspended from the High Court of Parliament, and charged with High Treason; the Bishop of York and eight more being committed to the Tower, the Bishops of Peterborough and Duresme to the Black Rod, and the Bishop of Landaffe cannot bee found.”

Printed at London and reprinted at Edinburgh. 8 pp., sm. 4to, printed across the page. The first leaf is used as a title, and the pagination begins on the third page with 1 and runs to 6. The

short title on the third page is simply "The Diurnall Occurrances." The signature is A. "Finis" appears on the last page.

This little periodical, which holds the honour of being the first known production of the Edinburgh newspaper press, is wholly taken up with English news, and is an exact reprint of a journal of the same name issued by John Hamond in London 1641.* The appearance of the London original has been closely imitated, the only liberty allowed being an occasional variation in spelling. As a specimen of the printer's art, the Edinburgh copy has distinctly the advantage: it is neater and cleaner.

In the following week another issue of the same periodical took place with a noticeable difference as to the form of the front page. The summary of the contents disappeared, and it read simply as "*Diurnall Occurrances* in Parliament, from the second of Januarie to the tenth, 1642. Printed by a perfect Copie. Printed at London." In the centre of the page was placed a shield with the monogram R.B. The omission of the fact that the paper was reproduced in Edinburgh was

* The Edinburgh edition was not the only reprint of this paper. It also appeared in what was probably a pirated form, without a printer's name, but with the imprint "London: printed 1641." [H].

probably due to inadvertence, for the device is that of Robert Bryson, an Edinburgh printer, who worked "At the Signe of Jonah" from 1640 to 1645, when he died. During that time Bryson produced several books, besides actively employing his press on behalf of the Covenanters. Although it does not carry his monogram, there seems no reason to doubt that he also produced the *Diurnall Occurrances* of the preceding week. The credit, therefore, of being the father of Scottish journalism belongs to Bryson, although the honour would have been much greater had his production been original to the north country.

1642.—A Continuation of the True Duirball Occurrences in Parliament. From the tenth of January to the twenty-fourth, 1642. Printed at Edinburgh, 1642. 16 pp., small 4to.

The first page acted as a title page for the issue, and Bryson's monogram had place in its centre. The second page was blank, and the letterpress occupied the remainder. Page 3 was headed by a short title reading "Duirball Occurrences in Parliament. From the tenth of January till the twenty-fourth. Anno 1642." The printing was across the full page, and the news given was again entirely concerned with the doings of the English Parliament. There is no indication that it is a reprint.

A copy of the issue for February 10-24, 1642, was recently exposed for sale in a London bookseller's catalogue.*

1651.—*Mercurius Scoticus*, or a true character of Affairs in England, Scotland, Ireland, and other Forraign Parts. Collected for Publick Satisfaction. Beginning Tuseday, July 22, to Tuseday, July 29, 1651. 8pp., sm. 8vo. No imprint.†

The order of the countries named in the title underwent change. In Nos. 4-9 it was "England, Ireland, and Scotland." From No. 10 to the end it ran "England, Scotland, France, and Ireland." Nos. 6, 7, 8, and 13 contained 12 pp., the rest 8 pp. The last known issue is No. 21, December 16-23, and the paper could not have lasted much longer. The English Commissioners sent down to settle the affairs of Scotland forbade, in January, 1652, "the printing of diurnalls att Leith or elsewhere."‡ That the prohibition killed the *Mercurius Scoticus* is made

* Thorp's, October, 1904.

† In the set examined, Nos. 2 and 3 are wanting. One of these numbers must have covered a fortnight. Arnot ("History of Edinburgh," p. 454) gives August 5 as the date of No. 1. He must accordingly have examined a defective copy, if he saw the paper at all.

‡ Lamont's "Diary," p. 37.

certain from a note that appears in a news-letter, dated January 20, 1652, found among the papers of Sir William Clarke—"You must not expect any prints from Leith for that the Commissioners have since their coming to Dalkeith given order to suppress *Mercurius Scoticus*."*

There can be no possible doubt that the *Mercurius* was issued at Leith. The Parliamentary army lay in garrison there in connection with the revolt of the Scots against the form of government set up in England by Cromwell, and the little journal was published in the interests of the soldiers. The preface to the first number, after justifying the presence of the English army in Scotland, ends with the words:—"Our army being desirous to be informed of passages in England and other parts hath envited me to use my endeavour briefly to hint them, which I shall continue weekly if this my first borne in Scotland may receive but the warmth of encouragement." The only known copy of the paper bears on its first page in a contemporary hand—"Printed att Leith and pub. by . . ."—the "abhorred shears" of the binder having unfortunately cut off the important words omitted. The news paragraphs frequently concern events which took

* Frith's "Scotland during the Commonwealth," p. 315.

place at Leith, and others take for granted that Leith is the place of issue. The first paragraph of No. 1 tells how "this day were brought into Leith garrison above 1200 of the officers and souldiers taken prisoner," and the last page of the same issue is occupied with "a list of Scottish officers now prisoners in Leith." Who the printer was must be left to conjecture, but he was probably Evan Tyler, who worked his press at Leith during the whole of 1651.*

The *Mercurius Scoticus* has accordingly the honour of being the first known paper to be produced, printed, and published in Scotland at first hand. Arnot calls it "the first newspaper that, we believe, was ever printed in Scotland."† It was like its contemporaries and successors in being largely indebted to other publications for its news, although some of the English papers recouped themselves by copying from its pages. It has been supposed‡ that it was edited by William Clarke, who had accompanied Cromwell to Scotland in 1650, and when that warrior returned to England, remained as secretary to General Monk.

* Only one book is advertised in its columns—Wood's "Deadman's Testament,"—and it is noteworthy that that volume was printed by Tyler.

† "History of Edinburgh," p. 454.

‡ Frith's "Scotland during the Commonwealth," p. liv.

Between 1651 and 1660 he acted in a similar capacity to the various officers who succeeded each other in command of the English army in Scotland. He returned to England in 1660, was knighted, obtained a State secretaryship, and died June 2, 1666.* There is some difficulty in accepting this conjecture. It would be somewhat strange for a man who occupied an official position, and would have many private State matters coming under his notice, to hold the questionable place of a caterer of public news at the same time. Besides, it is doubly strange that it required a special edict of the Commissioners to end it if Clarke was responsible for the paper. Monk, on his own authority, could soon have made short work of the extraneous labours of his secretary if that had been needful.

1652.—**A Diurnall of Some Passages and Affairs.** Printed at London, and re-printed at Leith. From Wednesday the 7 of April, to Wednesday 14 1652. 8 pp., sm. 8vo.

It is possible that this is No. 4 of the little journal, for the signature is D, and the pages are numbered 25-32. If so, and the issue were weekly, No. 1 would be dated March 17-24,

* "The Clarke Papers" in the Camden Society Publications, I., p. viii.

1652. The number opens with "propositions humbly tendered to the committee for propagating the gospel" for "the supply of all parishes in England with able, godly, and orthodox ministers," and goes on to give news from abroad and the home parliamentary intelligence.

How long the *Diurnall* continued is unknown. Arnot indicates that it existed till November. "In November, 1652," he says, "we find that it was thought sufficient to reprint at Leith, a newspaper first printed at London. . . . This paper was also of short duration." * Chalmers goes further, and adds that the paper was printed by Christopher Higgins, and was published "for the information of the English soldiers." † This is possible, but the whole appearance of the journal is strange after the Commissioners' Dalkeith edict of the preceding January.

1653.—Mercurius Politicus. This well-known paper was started in London in 1650 as an active ally of the Government. It was conducted by Marchmont Needham, whom Isaac Disraeli named "the great patriarch of newspaper writers," but who is better known for the number of times he changed his political coat. Chalmers says he

* "History of Edinburgh," p. 454.

† "Life of Ruddiman," p. 117.

assumed "all the colours of the chameleon during those contentious times," and Anthony Wood, the Oxford antiquary, describes him as "this most seditious, mutable, and railing author." When a young man he took the popular side, and sent out the *Mercurius Britannicus* in opposition to the Royalist *Mercurius Aulicus*. He then changed sides, and published the *Mercurius Pragmaticus*. When the head of Charles I. fell, he returned to his first love, and began the *Mercurius Politicus*. Chalmers says that it was "first reprinted at Leith on the 26th of October 1653,"* and the year is corroborated by Arnot. The latter gives the full title of the journal, which he evidently had from observation—

"*Mercurius Politicus*: comprising the Sum of Foreign Intelligence, with the Affairs now on foot in the three Kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, in defence of the Commonwealth and for information of the people. *Ita vertere seria*—Hor. *De Art. Poet.* Printed at London and Reprinted at Leith. The paper generally consisted of from 6 to 18 pp."† The printing is said

* "Life of Ruddiman," p. 117.

† "History of Edinburgh," p. 454. This title clearly refers to a number of date subsequent to September 27, 1655. Before that time the wording of the sub title was somewhat different.

to have been transferred to Edinburgh in November, 1654.

The Restoration of 1660 of necessity required that some changes should be made in the designation of the journal, and this is apparent from the first numbers of the Edinburgh reprint that have been examined—

Mercurius Politicus: comprising the Sum of Foreign Intelligence, with the affairs now on foot in the three Nations of England, Scotland, and Ireland—for Information of the People. Published by order of Parliament. From Thursday, January 26, to Friday, February 3, 1660. 16 pp., small 4to, weekly. Edinburgh: reprinted by Christopher Higgins in Hart's Close, over against the Trone Church, 1660. The paging is consecutive, and begins with 1. In the number for March 16-21, the words "Published by order of Parliament" were omitted—the space being left blank. In the following issue the space itself disappeared. The number for April 11-18 appeared as—

Mercurius Publicus: comprising the Sum of Foreign Intelligence, with the Affairs now on foot in the three Nations of England, Scotland, and Ireland—for Information of the People. Edinburgh: reprinted by Christopher Higgins in Hart's Close, over against the Trone Church, 1660. 16 pp., small 4to.

The reason for the change of name is given in the *Mercurius Publicus*, No. 15, published in London, April 5-12. It says: "Whereas Marchemont Nedham, the author of the weekly news Books called *Mercurius Politicus* and the *Public Intelligencer* is by order of the Council of State, discharged from writing or publishing any Publique Intelligence: the Reader is desired to take notice that by order of the said Council Henry Muddiman and Giles Dury are authorised henceforth to write and publish the said Intelligence, the one upon the Monday and the other upon the Thursday which they do intend to set out under the titles of the *Parliamentary Intelligencer* and the *Mercurius Publicus*." There is no evidence to show that the former of these two papers was reproduced in Scotland.

The *Mercurius Publicus* continued to be reprinted in Edinburgh weekly for some time. The issue for August 1-8, 1660, prefixed to the above imprint the words "Printed at London." This was continued till November 7-14 of the same year, when the printer's name was dropped, and the imprint read simply "Printed at London and Reprinted at Edinburgh 1660." The last number examined is that for December 20-27, 1660, which inserted the words "in the year" before the date in the imprint, and began a new system of signatures. The last number of the

parent journal is No. 33 of 1663. It is said to have been reprinted in Edinburgh till that year, although Chalmers says it was "superseded by *The Kingdom's Intelligencer*," which first saw the light in Scotland in 1661. It is interesting to think that in its earlier years the *Mercurius Politicus* introduced the prose of Milton to the inhabitants of the northern Kingdom.*

1659.—The Faithfull Intelligencer from the Parliaments Army in Scotland. From Tuesday, November 29, to Saturday, December 3, 1659. Written by an officer of the Army there. 12 pp., small 4to. Edinburgh: printed by Christopher Higgins in Hart's Close, over against the Trone Church. Anno Dom. 1659.†

That this was the first issue of this journal is proved by several facts. The signature is "A." The writer speaks of "this broken and irregular beginning of mine," meaning thereby his appearance in type, for he had been a news-letter

* Masson's "Milton," IV., 329-335.

† The copy described above is in the Advocates' Library. The British Museum, however, possesses another edition, which is probably a second edition as is indicated by the signatures. Its text is the same, but by using a smaller fount of type for the closing pages, the little journal is compressed into a sm. 4to of 8 pp.

writer before. In addition, the *Intelligencer's* natural enemy, the *Mercurius Politicus*, chronicles its advent in the issue for December 8-15, 1659, in a letter written from a correspondent at Newcastle. He gives the title, adding, as descriptive of it, that it was "a pure Scotch title, more sound than substance. It hath likewise a Highland pedigree,—hardly a line true." The same hostile commentator gives further particulars about the "bonny Diurnall," as he scornfully names it. "Many printed copies" had been sent to Newcastle; it was to be published "weekly;" and it was "printed at Edinburgh by authority." He promised to give particulars of later issues, but that promise was not apparently kept.

The author of the *Faithfull Intelligencer* tells that his "condition for the present (through a gracious Providence) [is] of a much more contenting and better Edition than that which amounts to a Diurnal-Writer," but confesses that he is unable to withhold himself when he finds "so many sad and infamous scandals pind upon all concernments amongst us from the General to the Sentinel, from the Magistrate to the Peasant, from the Priest to the meanest of the People." He declares his intention to "become an honest fool in print than a real and easy slave under ignorance and silence," and specially sets himself to reply to "the numerous and uncouth catalogue

of lyes" to which the recent *Politicus* had given currency. As was natural, the main contents of the *Intelligencer* referred to warlike operations. Though in Scotland, the writer did not love the place. He describes himself as being "in this remoteness of place, where for many years I have not only been bound to duty, but which does now imbitter that, have been muffled up from the breathings of our English air." His longings for the "English air" were so strong that he again uses the phrase before he brings his "pamphlet" to a close.

Only one issue was published under the name of the *Faithfull Intelligencer*. What should have been No. 2 appeared as the *Mercurius Britanicus*, No. 2. The following facts attest this—the signatures of the *Faithfull Intelligencer* are A and B, that of the *Mercurius Britanicus* is C; the printer of both is the same; and no real obstacle is found in the dating. No *Mercurius Britanicus*, No. 1, is known to exist.

The *Faithfull Intelligencer* is the first paper known to have been produced, edited, and published in Edinburgh at first hand.

1659.—*Mercurius Britanicus*, or a Collection of such real and faithful Intelligence as can be gathered from England and in Scotland concerning the present Transactions in them both. By an

officer of the Parliament's Army in Scotland. No. 2, from Thursday, December 8, to Thursday, December 15, 1659. 12 pp. small 4to. Edinburgh: printed by Christopher Higgins in Hart's Close, over against the Trone Church, 1659.

No. 3 is dated "From Thursday, December 15, to Tuesday, December 20, 1659." No. 4 contained the following note:—"These following papers coming so suddenly and unexpectedly into my hands, in that very nick of time that my last papers had passed the Presse: I thought it a duty incumbent upon me to let you have a speedier communication of them;" and is accordingly dated "From Tuesday, December 20, to Friday, December 23, 1659." No. 5 covered a longer period—December 23 to January 4; No. 6 (the last known) was from January 4 to January 6, and explained that the conductor had "shortened you in my last for fear of the bulk." The size was still 8 pp.

As already indicated, the *Mercurius Britannicus*, is probably the continuation of the *Faithfull Intelligencer*. Like the latter, it gives no hint of being a reprint, and no other journal of the name seems to have existed at the time. Higgins was then reproducing the *Mercurius Politicus*, and it bears the careful notice that it was merely a resetting of the London paper. Some idea of the *Mercurius Britannicus'* polemic may be gathered from its address to a rival:—

"Thou beastly scullion, canst thou not have a Partridge or Pheasant prepared for thy Master's use, but your Sauce-ship must necessarily lard it with the rank Collops of thine own Goose-grease? Hah! away and begon, if you love your health; for a stay and a surfet here can by no means be separated."

1661.—*Mercurius Caledonius*, comprising the Affairs now in Agitation in Scotland. With a Survey of Forraign Intelligence. Motto—" *Conamur Tenues Grandia.*" From Monday, December 31, to Tuesday, January 8, 1661. 8 pp. small 4to, weekly. Edinburgh: printed by a Society of Stationers in the Year 1661.

This was followed by a number dated Tuesday, 8th January, to Wednesday, 16th January, 1661, 16 pp., small 4to, with practically the same imprint. A change, however, seems to have been made with the third issue. It is marked "Numb. 1" on the top right-hand corner of page 1; is dated "From Wednesday, January 16, to Friday, January 25, 1661," and has as imprint—"Edinburgh: printed Anno Dom. 1661." It was small 4to, 16 pp. The following issues were consecutively numbered. No. 2 had 12 pp.; No. 3 was also 12 pp., and changed the motto, which thereafter became variable. The last number is marked "Numb. 10," and is dated Friday, March

22, to Thursday, March 28, 1661. There were thus altogether twelve numbers. Black-letter type was sometimes used.

The editorship of the *Mercurius Caledonius* is universally ascribed to Thomas St. Serfe—or Tom Sydserf, as he is more commonly called. He was a man of considerable ability and versatility, although Chalmers * speaks of his journal as being “very illiterate and very affected,” and Chambers says “it must be admitted that the style of composition and editorship was frivolous and foolish to a degree, surprising even for that delirious period.” † Royalist to the core, Sydserf employed his biting pen strenuously on behalf of the cause he espoused. Charles I. was a martyr for righteousness’ sake. “We cannot doubt,” he says, “of the happy condition of our late dread Sovereign of ever blessed memory, Charles the First; being assured by the voice of truth itself that whosoever looseth his life for Christ’s sake shall find it.” In the first issue of the *Mercury* he vehemently assures all interested of the loyalty of his countrymen—

“Though it was the pleasure of Providence to disappoint our designs, yet we never grudged either at

* “Life of Ruddiman,” p. 118.

† “Dom. Ann. Scot.,” II., 272.

our imprisonments, the losse of the dearest of our blood, nor devastation of our fortunes ; And which is our great comfort, we have attained so much knowledge as never again to be juggled out of our reason under the notion of specious pretences : for the drowsiest clown of our northern island can with content smile at the cheats of Liberty and the good old cause. And therefore the Blasphemers, *Rumpers*, and other Antimonarchicall Vermin in England must cast about some where else than for companions in Scotland."

Little wonder that his opponents grew alarmed at his attacks. Robert Baillie denounced him as "a very rascall, Tom Sincerfe the Diurnaller, a profane, atheistical papist as some count him,"* and writes to James Sharpe, minister of Crail, who was then in the thick of his treacherous purpose to desert to the side which Sydserf supported, to see if nothing could be done to end his scurrilities. "James," he writes, "have you no so much power to stay the railing on us of that very malicious Diurnaller? If the Parliament would put on him the penalty of my worme, I think it would quickly temper his very uncivill pen."† Baillie's remedy was hardly so drastic as that to which Sydserf was subjected some years later at the hands of Mungo Murray for some offence or

* "Letters and Journals," III., 468.

† Ibid., III., 454. Baillie refers to his toothache.

other.* The appeal to Sharpe was not the happiest possible, for Sydserf had already discounted opposition from the future Archbishop by the terms of praise in which in his first number he had spoken of one of his sermons. It was delivered, said Sydserf, with "so great piety and learning as was sufficient to recover the most perverse heretic or dissatisfied brother, either in law or gospel, to their civil and Christian obedience."

The Scottish authorities were unmoved by the complaints of those whom Sydserf attacked, and approach was made to a more august power. Says Baillie—"Mr. Blair, Mr. Dickson, and Mr. Hutcheson were, without all cause, mischantly abused by his pen, without the resentment of our State, till his Majestic himself commanded to silence him."† The intervention of Charles II. on behalf of poor slandered Presbyterians is odd enough, but there seems to be no doubt that an "authoritative stop" was put to the paper. In April and May, 1661, several pamphlets were published from the Edinburgh press, which bear unmistakable evidence that they were by, and in the interest of, Sydserf. They were, to all intents and purposes, un-

* See page 63.

† "Letters and Journals," III., 468.

authorised continuations of the *Mercurius Caledonius*, even containing advertisements. They make plain that the paper was suppressed, and that on religious grounds. "Bourlasque News"* gives intelligence of a supposititious place named "Cardenia." Certain resolutions passed there declare, among other things, "that there be a padlock on the Pen and a Gage in the mouth of *Mercurius Caledonius* if from henceforth he do not draw a vail over the Phanatick infirmities of the Cardenian Lunaticks." "Edinburgh's Joy for His Majesties Coronation in England"† exclaims—"Why? is not whiffing *Caledonius* gone; certainly he hath been Babbon-struck or Prieststabbed," and adds—"It was no sooner noised that we was to be *Mercurius* for the Good Town, but we was alarmed with innumerable advertisements . . . amongst the rest, one appeared for *Caledonius*." These were followed by "The Prince of Tartaria, his Voyage to Cowper in Fife," "The Work Goes Bonnely On," and a "Variety of News for all Pallats as Certainties, Probabilities, &c."‡ It is evident that Sydserf did not succumb to command without a struggle and protest, and that his anger against his religious opponents was

* 8 pp., sm. 4to. No imprint.

† 8 pp., sm. 4to, "Printed in the year 1661."

‡ All these are 8 pp., sm. 4to, with no imprints.

not lessened by his treatment at the hands of those he tried to defend.*

1661.—**The Scout of Cockeny**, 4to, 8 pp., the last being blank. The text begins on page 1. Colophon: Printed at Cockenay for the Company of Stationers at Earls-Ferry.

Cockenzie is a fishing village in East Lothian, and Earlsferry lies on the Fifeshire coast of the Firth of Forth. The copy examined bears a MS. note, "Printed at Edinburgh in 1661 by a Society of Stationers." Chalmers has this note on the paper: "This is a burlesque newspaper which was printed at the Press of the Society of Stationers, as the typographical ornaments and figured letters evince. It was probably published by the same editor as the collector of the *Mercurius Caledonius*, as sarcasm upon the authoritative stop which was put to that paper."†

* The *Scots Magazine* for July, 1776, announces the death of Robert Mein on July 25, at the age of 93. It adds that his great grandfather and father were both postmasters in Edinburgh, and then goes on: "Persons who wanted to be furnished with the *Mercurius Caledonius*, published so far back as 1661, or who had essays or advertisements to insert in that paper, were desired to apply to Robert Mein, master of the Post Office at Edinburgh."

† MS. "History of Scottish Printing," p. 334. (In Advocates' Library.)

The writer concocts paragraphs from such places as Lochquaber, Tinto-Tope, and Killimuire, and even inserts advertisements. His closing words are mysterious: "If any person be so foolish as to think there is nothing contained in this Gazet, or so serious that there's something, he may be mistaken in both; however, if any can find out the right Key, our Worshipfull Senat of Cockeny does promise to recommend him as a qualified Wit, to be Ænigmatical Professor in any of the new established Seminaries for Strange Discoveries."

1661.—The Kingdoms Intelligencer of the Affairs now in Agitation in Scotland, England, and Ireland, together with Forraign Intelligence—to prevent False News. Published by Authority. From Thursday, October 23, to October 30, 1661. Reprinted at Edinburgh, 1661. 12 pp., sm. 4to.

The above is the first issue that has come under observation. The London issue of the journal of this name began on December 31, 1660. It was the successor of the *Parliamentary Intelligencer*, which, owing to the political situation, had to change its title—"the parliament itself (from which he borrowed that compilation) being now dissolved," as the conductor said. It does not appear that it was reproduced in Scotland until some months after its start. As long as the

Mercurius Caledonius lasted, it seems to have supplied what was needful for Edinburgh, even quoting from its London contemporary under the explanatory title of *The Kingdom of England's Intelligencer*. At that time it was edited by Sir John Birkenhead.

The history of the Scottish journal is somewhat mysterious after 1661. Three issues for that year are known, the one noted above and two dated November 7-14 and November 14-21. These carry the same imprint. The next known issues are dated from June 26-July 3 to August 14-21, 1662. The size is the same, but the imprint reads, "Edinburgh: printed Anno Dom., 1662." Two issues also exist for July 9-16 and July 16-23, 1663, with the latter imprint. Again no mention is made of the paper being a reprint, although the London paper still continued to be published. What had happened in the meantime? Did the periodical begin an original issue in Edinburgh in the closing days of 1661, and discard mere reproduction of its contemporary?

That is what probably took place. On December 5, 1661, the Privy Council allowed the publication of a newspaper. The words of the minute ran—"Warrant is granted to Robert Mein, Keiper of the letter office of Edinburgh, to putt to print and publish ane Diurnall weiklie for preventing false newes which may be invented by evill and

disaffected persons.”* No new journal is known to have been begun that year and the probability is that Mein assumed the London name, and trusting largely to the contents of his contemporary, launched out on what was practically an original effort. A comparison of contemporary issues of the two papers lends some colour to the assumption. Almost everything in the Scottish journal can be found, *ipsissima verba*, in the London journal, but the order of the paragraphs is changed and the contents of one number of the Edinburgh paper require to be sought for over several issues of its contemporary. Whether Mein copied solely from his namesake, or both had a common origin, it is impossible to say.

The English *Kingdoms Intelligencer* came to an end on August 24, 1663. Its place was taken by the *Intelligencer*, whose first number declared that “His Sacred Majesty [had] been lately and graciously pleased to grant and commit the privilege of publishing all intelligence together with the survey and inspection of the Presse to one and the same person,” viz., Roger L’Estrange. The Edinburgh paper, however, continued triumphantly on its way. In Worcester College, Oxford there is a number whose collation is :—

* “Reg. Priv. Coun.,” December 5, 1661.

The Kingdoms Intelligencer of The Affairs now in agitation in Scotland, England, and Ireland, together with Forraign Intelligence. To prevent false News. Published by Authority. Thursday, June 2, 1664, 28 pp., sm. 4to., pp. 17-44. Signature F. Edinburgh: Printed Anno Dom., 1664.

Page 44 contained an Edinburgh paragraph, dated May 30, 1664, which shows that the compiler was not trusting altogether to his contemporaries. Another issue for September 8, 1664—8pp. 4to. pages 149-156—has also been examined. Chalmers, to whom this last copy belonged, says that it was "printed by the Stationers no doubt."* Its appearance, however, suggests the press of A. Anderson, whose house was on the North side of the Cross.

How long the *Kingdoms Intelligencer* continued is unknown. Chalmers says it "still retailed the news of London to the people of Scotland at the time that Ruddiman was born,"† viz., October 1674. Arnot's statement gives a less extended period for the life of the journal. "From the copies we have seen of this paper," he says, "it subsisted at least seven years,"‡ i.e., to 1668.

* MS. Collections, p. 343.

† "Life of Ruddiman," p. 118.

‡ "History of Edinburgh," p. 455.

1680.—**Edinburgh Gazette.** Published by Authority. From Tuesday the 7th to Tuesday the 14th of December, 1680. Printed by the Heir of A. Anderson, printer to the King's Most Sacred Majesty. No. 2—This *Edinburgh Gazette* appears to have been first printed on the 1st of December, 1680. How long it continued I have not discovered.

This is Chalmers' note in his "Life of Ruddiman,"* and when he published that book, his only authority was—"I have just been opportunely informed." Later, however, he came into possession of the second issue, for the entry in his MS. "History"† runs—"The *Edinburgh Gazette*, No. 2, Published by Authority. From Tuesday, the 7th, to Tuesday, the 14th of December, 1680. Printed by the heir of And. Anderson, printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1680; folio, two pages. In G.C. Library. The first number of this *Gazette* must have been from Tuesday, 30 November, to Tuesday, 7 December, 1680. How long it continued is unknown."

Chalmers' positive assertion makes erroneous the statement‡ of James Donaldson, that his

* p. 441.

† p. 458.

‡ *Vide, Scots Postman*, 1708.

Gazette (of 1699) was the first officially sanctioned newspaper.

The heir of A. Anderson mentioned was his widow, Anderson having died in 1679. She exercised the printing monopoly conferred upon her husband in a way that wrought great damage on the progress of the art in Scotland. James Watson is most emphatic—"By this gift the art of printing in this Kingdom got a dead stroke, for by it no printer could print anything from a Bible to a ballad without Mr. Anderson's license."*

1681. — *Heraclitus Ridens*: A discourse between Jest and Earnest, where many a true Word is spoken in opposition to all Libellers against the Government. No. 1, undated, folio, single sheet, two columns to page. Motto—

"Ridentem dicere verum
Quis vetat."—*Hor.*

Imprint: "Edinburgh: reprinted in the year 1681." No. 2 shortened the sub title to "At a Dialogue between Jest and Earnest Concerning the 'Times,'" was dated Tuesday, February 8, 1681, and had the same imprint. No. 3 was dated a week later, and dropped "Edinburgh" from the imprint. These are all the known Edinburgh issues.

* "History of Printing," p. 12.

The *Heraclitus Ridens* was, with the exception of the imprint, an exact reprint, even to the advertisements, of the London publication of the same name. The latter's imprint ran: "London, Printed for the Use of the People, Tuesday, Feb. 1, 1681," and, as appeared from subsequent issues, was set up "for B. Tooke." Thomas Flatman, poet and miniature painter, has been credited with the authorship, and the journal is said to have originated in high circles as a counterblast to more democratic and disloyal publications. No. 1 opened with the words—

"There's an honest fellow at St. Germans Fair in France that retails wit in penny worths, and makes a very pretty living on't, and much honester than many who nowadays pretend to live by their wits; for there you have the best sort of it, if the proverb speaks truth—that bought wit is the best. For my part (though I know those, who are no small fools, who have got God knows what by selling of these dear penny worths) I protest I do not intend to make any advantage of you, but only to keep the trade going in this dead time by turning the penny."

The writer then goes on to declare that "my design is great and generous; nothing less, I assure you, than the public good."

The last London issue appeared on August 22, 1682, the editor saying that he "did at first take up this way of scribbling purely out of a sense of Duty and Loyalty at a time when both were shock'd

and well-nigh overturned by the Outrage and Intemperance of a restless and daring faction." Although he ceased publication then, he intimates that he will take up his task again "so soon as he shall from the Insolence of our enemies be provoked to resume his Province of lashing a Wanton and disloyal world." The necessity never arose.

1681.—The Weekly Discovery of the Mystery of Iniquity in the Rise, Growth, Methods, and Ends of the Late Unnatural Rebellion in England. Anno 1681. No. 3. Saturday February 19, 1680. Reprinted in the year 1681. S. sh. folio., 2 cols. to the page. It is probable that this periodical was produced in Edinburgh. Only one number is known to exist.

The original appeared in London. "London. Printed for Benj. Tooke, 1681." No. 1 was dateless: No. 2 bore Saturday, February 12, 1680. The last issue, being No. 30, was sent out on August 27, 1681. The author then desired to suspend publication until "the dead vacation was passed," and begged allowance for "this Parenthesis of a little time" in the hope that he would resume his work—a hope that never seems to have been fulfilled. The nature of the periodical may perhaps best be learned from the description of it that appeared in a rival, "*The Weekly Discoverer Strip'd Naked*, or Jest and Earnest Exposed to Publick View in

his Proper Colours," No. 1 of which was published on February 16, 1680. "The Reader," it says, "is desired to take Notice that since our restless adversaries have so strangely undertOOK to spread abroad their Popish Poyson every week, the publisher of this paper will in like manner weekly supply him with an antidote against it." The pun is obvious.

1688.—*Bibliotheca Universalis*, or an Historical Account of Books and Transactions of the Learned World. Begun Anno Dom. MDCLXXXVIII. No. 1, January, 1688, 128 pp., 12 mo., monthly. Edinburgh, printed by John Reid for Alexander Ogston and William Johnston, stationers.

"Each moneth," said the introductory note, "shall consist of six sheets at least, which may be had from the stationers themselves for 7 pence—viz., Alexander Ogston, in the Parliament Close, and William Johnston, overagainst the Court of Guards."

This journal has the honour of being the first attempt made in Edinburgh to publish a review. Its programme included accounts "of what is doing abroad by the learned world, and also to report what the virtuosos and learned among ourselves are pleased to communicate. Our stationery trade," continue the publishers, "going not very far as yet, and it being too much for a private stock to

bring home all sorts of books, therefore the accounts of many books must be taken upon the credit of those who publish them abroad." Reliance was chiefly placed upon the two continental journals, the *Bibliothèque Universelle* and the *Histoire de Ouvrages des Sçavans* of Paris—whose names seem to have suggested that of the Edinburgh publication.

Its projector and editor was John Cockburn, minister at Ormiston, East Lothian, where he had been settled in 1683. He experienced much difficulty in starting his journal, for application had first to be made to an unenthusiastic Privy Council for authority to proceed. He was encouraged, however, by the fact that "such a work had created a healthy interest and emulation in England, France, Germany, and Holland," and at length succeeded in obtaining the necessary permission. The license, however, did not long remain in force. On March 13, it was withdrawn before a second number could be sent out. Fountainhall* gives the reason—"the Chancellor, thinking some passages of it reflected on the Popish religion, especially the abstract of Smith's Dissertation and Mabillion's *Museum Italicum*, though he be a Jesuit; therefore he discharged him to print any more and by himself alone recalled the Privy

* "Decisions," I., 502.

Council's order, and said he would cause his own churchmen do it better." Such arbitrary treatment does not seem to have turned Cockburn against King James, for he was on August 29, 1689, deprived for not reading the proclamation of William and Mary's ascension of the throne, and for refusing to pray for their new Majesties.

That the editor had a worthy zeal is shown by a footnote which he appends to one of the reviews—"If any desire to see this curious book, the first part whereof has been here extracted, they may find it with Mr. Hugh Craig, merchant, or Mr. Mosman, stationer." The first number was confessedly too much dependent on foreign journals, but more originality was promised for the future that unfortunately never came.

1688.—*The Test Paper.* With Allowance. Holy-Rood-House. Printed by Mr. P. B., * Enginier, Printer to His Most Excellent Majesty for His Houshold, Chappel, and Colledge. MDCLXXXVIII. No. 1. Folio, 4 pp. In No. 2 the title was changed to *The Weekly Test Paper*. It is dated "Wednesday, May the 16th." As the name indicates, *The Test Paper* was mainly con-

* These were the initials of a versatile and energetic foreigner named Peter Brauss or Bruce. (See Cowan's "Holyrood Press," p. 8.)

cerned with the Test Act of 1681 and 1685. Being prepared in the interests of James II., *The Test Paper* denounced the enactment, which it ridiculed as "the Mighty Man of War, the Test"; "the supposed Wall of Defence about the Church of England," and so on. In No. 2 the argument was that the law was contrary to the Golden Rule.

Only two numbers of this paper are known to exist. Neither of them contains news, and each may be regarded rather as a pamphlet or tract than as a newspaper. They were reprints of a London journal, which ran to four numbers at least, the last being issued on May 30. The London publisher was George Croom.

1688.—Public Occurrences Truly Stated. With Allowance. Folio, 4 pp. Tuesday, May 29th, 1688. Holy-Rood-House. Printed by Mr. P. B., Enginier, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, for His Houshold, Chappel, and Colledge. MDCLXXXVIII. This is the only number of the print that has been found. Mr. Cowan states that, "like *The Test Paper*, it is a reprint of a paper issued in London. The first number of the latter is dated February 21, 1687-8, and it seems to have appeared weekly thereafter, but it is uncertain how long it continued. The latest number which has come under notice is No. 34, dated October 2, 1688." *Public Occurrences*

contains, as the name would suggest, a goodly proportion of news, the third page being so devoted. The rest of the paper is taken up with the usual polemic. The editor had his woes:—"I know," he says, "it can be no great news to tell you that the Author of this poor paper is malign'd and call'd a thousand ill names for his honest endeavours to serve the government. He has had many scores of reviling and threatening letters on that occasion." The London issue bore the imprint: "Printed by George Larkin, at the Two Swans, without Bishopsgate."

1688.—*The Weekly Journal from London.* With Allowance. No. 4 has been seen: Wednesday, May the 30th. 4 pp. folio. Holyrood House: printed by Mr. P. B., Enginier, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty for His Houshold, Chappel, and Colledge. MDCLXXXVIII. It begins:—"We are now enquiring after the Honesty of this hum-drum Test, if any body knew where to find it: some say it is fled into Alsatia for refuge, and 'tis bad pursuing it for broken bones." The writer's opinion of James II. is shown by this sentence:—"What Prince ever swaying the English sceptre was endowed with more Wisdom, Prudence, Moderation, and all other Monarchical perfection than our present most Excellent Sovereign shines forth in the glory of: yet is of the Roman Catholic

Communion." The above is the only example of the paper that has been found, and the number of issues is unknown.

1688.—**The Christian Duirnall.** This name occurs in a list of eight books which a correspondent to *Notes and Queries*,* who signed himself J.O., gave as having been issued from the Holyrood Press, 1686-1688. All effort to discover a copy has been unsuccessful. The descriptive adjective in the title is so unusual at the time that its use in this case marks out the paper, if it ever existed. There was a *New Christian News* in 1643.

1689—**Orange Gazette.** With Allowance. From Tuesday, Feb. 19, to Friday, Feb. 22, 168⁸₉. 4 pp. folio, the third being blank. Reprinted in the year 1689.

The following number added the sub title "with Extraordinary news at Home and Abroad," had the signature "A," was a single sheet folio, and was dated Feb. 21-26, 1689. The imprint was the same. The next issue was dated Feb. 26-March 1, and the following March 1-5, both being single sheets folio, with the same imprint. It is likely that these papers were produced in Edinburgh, although the name of the city does not appear on them. Its absence would be sufficiently explained by the Anderson monopoly if

they were printed in contravention of it. The Constable "Collection of Tracts" had "3 nos. Edinburgh 1689." The original issue began in London in 1688, and the name sufficiently indicates the side the journal espoused in the transition time during which it was published.

1689—The London Gazette. Published by Authority. From Thursday, March 14, to Monday, March 18, 1688. Single sheet folio. Edinburgh: Reprinted in the year 1689. Close printed across the page. No further issues have come under notice. The original issue began at Oxford in 1665.

1690—Mercurius Reformatus. This journal, the first issue of which appeared on Wednesday, May 5, 1689, in London, sets out its purpose thus—

"Among the Irregularities attending the last two reigns that of scribbling weekly accounts of, and Reflections upon public Transactions was none of the least. The Grand Popish Managers at Court were not pleased with cheating the Nation out of its Liberties and the best of its Patriots out of their lives unless to the boot, they set a-work a sort of Journeymen to cheat the less thinking part of the people out of their reason and senses by their pens"—

* *Notes and Queries.* 2nd Series, ix., 328.

and the *Mercurius Reformatus* was intended to counteract the mischief that was thus done and might still be done. A journal of this kind was almost certain of a welcome in Scotland, and it was accordingly reprinted in Edinburgh during 1690 and 1691. One number for June 4, 1690, in folio, reprinted by the Heir of Andrew Anderson, exists, as well as numbers for Friday, May 29, 1691, 4 pp. folio, "Edinburgh: reprinted in the year 1691"; and for Friday, May 8, 1691, 4 pp. folio, "Edinburgh: reprinted by the Heir of Andrew Anderson, Printer to their Most Excellent Majesties. Anno Dom. 1691." Like the London original, the reprint bore the sub title of the *New Observer*. A table of contents followed the heading. The numbers indicate what Chalmers had "some reason to believe, that this new *Observer* was printed at Edinburgh by other printers as well as by the heir of Andrew Anderson."* The conductor is understood to have been James Welwood, M.D., and the London issue ran till 1691, and then, under the name of *Mercurius Britannicus*, till 1694. It was also reproduced in Amsterdam and Rotterdam.

1690.—The Present State of Europe; or, the Historical and Political Mercury: giving

* MS. Collections, p. 557.

an Account of all the Publick and Private Occurrences that are most considerable in every Court, for the month of October, 1690, with curious reflections upon every State. To be continued monthly: from the original published at the Hague by the Authority of the State of Holland and West Friesland, in the same size and fineness of Paper, for encouragement of any who shall devise to bind any quantity of them by way of book. Edinburgh: reprinted by the Heir of Andrew Anderson, Printer to their Most Excellent Majesties, Anno Dom., 1690, and are to be sold at their shop in the North side of the Cross, and at Mistress Ogston's shop in the Parliament Closs. No. 1. October, 1690. 34 pp., small 8vo, printed across the page.

The whole of the foregoing appeared on the first page of each number, which also contained a table of contents. The second page of No 2, had the words, "Licensed Decemb. 4, 1690. [Signed] J. Fraser." This notice appeared in all the issues up to that for July, 1691. The fourth number was numbered No. 1, Vol. II., and considerably amplified the title. It added "Monthly" before "Mercury," described the "occurrences" as "Civil, Ecclesiastical, and Military," and after "Court" printed "the various interests of Princes, their several Claims, Disputes, and Intrigues, &c." At the same time a short title was adopted for head-

ing page 3. It ran, "The Historical and Political Mercury for the month of January, 1691." 38 pp. The March, 1691, issue contained the following "advertisement":—"The reason of the *Mercury's* coming out so late in the month is because the Pacquet-boat with the Letters on the 6th instant in which it was sent was taken by the French." The October number let readers know that the preceding twelve numbers could be had in one volume from the printer—an arrangement which ignored pagination and numbering. A similar notice in December indicated that the year's numbers could be had in a complete volume. It is unknown whether further publication took place in Edinburgh.

The peculiarity of this periodical is that it is a reprint of a London translation of a foreign newspaper. The *Mercure Historique et Politique* was started at The Hague in 1686 by G. de Courtilz de Sandras, and ran to 1777. It was reproduced in London under the title of *The General History of Europe, contained in the Historical and Political Mercuries*, by I. Phillips, who dated his first volume 1690. In subsequent volumes the title pages stand as in the Edinburgh reprint. The London reproduction ran to forty-five volumes, 1690-1733. It was also reprinted in Dublin.

1691.—Dublin Intelligence, giving a true

Account of the Killing of several Rapparees in Ireland. No. 38. Published by Authority. Single sheet folio. From Tuesday, June 9, to Wednesday, June 16, 1691. Printed at Dublin and Reprinted at Edinburgh, Anno Dom., 1691. It is unknown whether other numbers were published at Edinburgh.

The whole contents of this odd sheet are a grim catalogue of the slaughter or capture of Irish rapparees. This extract will suffice as an example :—

“On Sunday last Collonel Beecher, Lieutenant Collonel Moore, and Captain Bernard, with the Militia under their command, marched from Wintervary into the enemies’ Quarters, killed between forty and fifty Rapparees, brought off 1,100 head of Black Cattle, 1,200 sheep, and 100 Garrans, and returned to their respective Quarters without the least loss.”

The Rapparees were the irregular Irish soldiers, who carried pikes and took part in the wars of 1688-92. Their characteristics made their name synonymous with bandit, robber, freebooter.

No. 1 was published on September 30, 1690, in Dublin, and the paper was also reprinted in London. This is the only known Edinburgh reproduction of an Irish periodical.

1699.—*The Edinburgh Gazette.* Numb. 1. From Tuesday, February 28, to Thursday, March

2d, 1699. s. sh., folio: 2 cols. to the page. Edinburgh: printed by James Watson in Craig's Closs, on the north-side of the Cross.* On col. 4 appeared this notice:—

“Advertisement—The publishing of this *Gazette* is intended to be much sooner and also much fuller hereafter: For as yet neither hath the Publisher gotten Correspondents settled throughout the Kingdom for Intelligence; nor the Press (and other things that must be had towards the quick Dispatch thereof) but in such order as are necessar; But in time coming, all things will be in readiness that within 4 or 5 hours after the Post

* Another edition of No. 1 exists. It is an exact reproduction of the above, with the exception that it bears the words, “Published by Authority,” and has the imprint, “Edinburgh: printed by John Reid at his Printing House in Bell's Wynd.” That it professes to be issued by authority shows that it was published subsequent to Mar. 10, and the imprint throws the date still farther forward—till after the issue of No. 42. That Watson's was the original issue is further assured by the fact that Donaldson says Reid had complained that, after issuing the former's book on Husbandry, he was not allowed to publish the *Gazette* (see p. 208). Two editions were also issued of No. 2, both by Watson. One is wrongly numbered “No. 1,” and has the type on page 2 smaller and the lines more crowded together to admit of nearly an additional column of matter being inserted in the first column of the first page. The other has a shorter imprint ending it at the word “Closs,” and puts “Tuesday, Mar. 2,” in the date in mistake for “Thursday.”

arriveth, the *Gazette* will be published ; and as soon as possible Correspondents shall be settled for Inland news.

Any who have advertisements to publish, may send them to the Printer's House where they shall be insert in the *Gazette* on reasonable terms."

The contents of the issue consisted of a proclamation concerning the excise, two local paragraphs, and the above "Advertisement," the remainder, more than half of the entire paper, being occupied with intelligence from outside of Scotland.

The price at which the *Gazette* was published was probably one penny. At least, No. 3 contained a note which leads to that inference. Arrangements were there made for subscribers living beyond the city bounds receiving the paper :—

"Whosoever would constantly have copies thereof and live out of town . . . every week they shall have two copies of the *Gazetts* enclosed in a paper directed for them and sent to the Post Office, and at the Receipt thereof they shall be obliged to pay a penny for each *Gazett* beside the Postage which is thought to be the least that can be allowed considering the inclosing and directing as above."

In No. 17 it was intimated that "whole setts of *Gazettes* are to be sold at John Vallange's shop." A supplement, or "*Edinburgh Gazette Extraordinary*," was occasionally issued.

The projector of the *Gazette* was James Donaldson, who had had a varied career before he settled

down as "the writer of the *Gazette*," as he calls himself, or the "Gazetteer" as he is named in the Records of the Privy Council. In one of his petitions to that august body, he says of himself that—"Having levied a company of foot at his own charge, anno 1689, and having served in the Earl of Angus's Regiment [the Cameronians] till the same was reduced from 20 to 13 companies, by which experiences and being quite out of the way of business, he was so involved in debt that in a few years after all his means were quite exhausted." For a livelihood he turned to journalism. He required the imprimatur of the Privy Council before he could actively pursue that profession, but he boldly anticipated their approval and sent out his first number, as above, without the mystic words, "Printed by Authority" upon it. Before No. 4 was due he had received official recognition. The Act of the Privy Council "in favors of James Donaldson for printing the *Gazette*" was dated March 10, 1699, and is as follows:—

"Anent the petition given in to the Lords of his Majesty's Privy Council be James Donaldson, merchant in Edinburgh, shewing that the petitioner doeth humbly conceive the publishing of ane Gazett in this place containeing ane abridgment of fforaigne newes, together with the occurances at home, may be both usefull and satisfieing to the leidges, and actually hath published one or two to see how it may be liked, and so farr as he could understand,

the project was approved of by very many. And therefore, humbly supplicating the said Lords to the effect after mentioned: The Lords of His Majesty's Privy Councill, haveing considered this petition given in to them by the above James Donaldson, They doe hereby grant full warrand and authority to the petitioner for publishing the above Gazett, and discharges any other persones whatsoever to pen or publish the like under the penalties of forfaulting all the coppies to the petitioner, and farder payment to him of the sonne of ane hundred pounds Scots money by and attour the forsaid confiscation and forfaulture, and recommends to the Lord High Chancellor to nominat and appoint a particular person to be supervisor of the said Gazetts before they be exposed to publict view, printed, or sold."

Donaldson left no stone unturned to ensure the initial success of his paper. He applied for the approval and support of the Scottish Convention of Burghs, whose minute of February 10, 1699, stands:—"The Conventione remitts to the Comity that it is to sit after disolveing of this Convention . . . the proposall given in by James Donaldsone anent the publishing of ane Edinburgh Gazet and to give him such encouragement therein as they shall think fitt, they always advancing no monie, but remitts that part to the General Convention in July."* The Convention again met in Edinburgh on July 4, when they had had four months'

* "Records of Convention of Royal Burghs, 1677-1711," p. 279.

experience of the paper. After consideration, they "appoint the agent to pay him the sowme of threty pound sterline for his encouragement to continow in publishing the Edinburgh Gazet, to the next general convensione and recommends to all the royal borrows as they think fitt to concert and agree with the said Mr. Donaldson for furnishing any of them the newes and gazets by everie post."*

It does not appear that the paper ever again came before the Convention, but we know that its advice was not ignored. Montrose became a subscriber for two copies. The Town Council of Stirling anticipated the Convention's recommendation, finding an opportunity for economy in the new journal. Their minute of May 20, 1699, reads that, "considering that they may be served by the *Edinburgh Gazett*, which contains both forraigne and domestick occurrences at ane far more easy rate than by the transaction formerly made with John Murray, generall postmaster, therefor they pas from and overgive the said transaction for the future, and appoints the clerk to acquaint the said John Murray therewith that he forbear from henceforth to send any Gazetts or Flicing Post newes here."†

* Ibid., p. 286.

† "Extracts from Records of Stirling, 1667-1745," p. 90.

Donaldson does not appear to have stood unaided, at least at the beginning. He had one noble patron whose name unfortunately has been lost. Soon after the start of the journal, he wrote to this patron detailing to him the trouble he was encountering, as well as the progress he was making: * "It grows daily better, and I doubt not but in a very short time it may prove a very profitable thing, but I meet with a great deal of enviers, for not only is Mrs. Anderson using all her endeavours against me, but I have the envy of such as keep coffee houses and those who used to write news letters, so that it is very hard for me to keep a sure footing where so many eyes are upon me and waiting for my halting."

Mrs. Anderson's opposition arose from the strict way in which she construed the rights that had been conferred upon her husband and continued to herself. Nothing that was remotely connected with government would she consent to appearing. This, however, was not Donaldson's only hindrance. He continues:—"I find myself at a little inconveniency in printing of the *Gazette*, for, besides Mrs. Anderson, who requires me in her instrument to employ her, the man who printed my book of Husbandry [Reid] alleges I wrong him in

* "*Edinburgh Courant* Reprint," p. 23.

going by now. And this man now employed in printing the *Gazette* I cannot handsomely leave, in respect he wrought for me at the beginning when none would undertake it. So that I am resolved to serve all alike, to provide myself with a press and as much letter as will do it."

With No. 42, however, in spite of Donaldson's determination to stand by Watson, he again employed Reid, the imprint of the *Gazette* becoming, "Edinburgh, printed by John Reid at his Printing House in Bell's Wynd." Why the change was made is not clear, but perhaps the reason was not unremotely connected with a calamity that befell Donaldson on June 8. On that day he was committed to prison by order of the Privy Council "for printing several things in his *Gazette* which are not truths and for which he has no warrant." Five days afterwards he humbly craved the mercy of the Council on the ground that his journal was proving of public service, "notwithstanding he was dissuaded by most of his friends from attempting to undertake it as a thing that could not defray the charges of printing intelligence." He begged that his fault be overlooked, and that the Council would "give him instructions how to act for the future." The Council took a lenient view of his offence, and liberated him, although at the same time they made arrangements for the due revision of the *Gazette* by a committee of their

own body before it was published.* It does not appear what part, if any, Watson had in these events, but they may have been the cause of the separation between printer and publisher. Donaldson's only discoverable reference to the change was made in 1705, when he said "he found it in his interest to disengage himself of" Watson.

Several changes in the imprint occurred while Reid was the printer. In No. 236—Thursday, June 19, to Monday, June 23, 1701—it became—"Edinburgh: printed by John Reid and sold in the shop immediately below the Caledona Coffee House." At No. 323—April 16-April 20, 1702—the printer became John Reid, Junr., at his father's address. On June 4-8 (No. 336) Reid removed to a new printing establishment in Liberton's Wynd, where he carried on his business for several years.

For five years Donaldson continued to publish his paper, until he was involved in considerable difficulties. These arose out of the starting of the *Edinburgh Courant*, in February, 1705, by Adam Boig. Donaldson held that the licence he had obtained from the Privy Council conferred upon him a newspaper monopoly for the capital. When Boig was granted a similar right he lodged a protest with the Council on the ground

* "Reg. Priv. Council," June 8 and 13, 1699.

that Boig's licence was an infringement of his privilege.* His motion, however, in some way failed, and Boig tried every expedient to oust his rival from the good graces of the citizens. He undersold him to the extent of 4s. per quire. Donaldson retaliated by reducing his price also, but Boig carried on the warfare by declaring that the *Courant* was superior both in home and foreign news, and that Donaldson had ceased to have any interest in the *Gazette*. This really seems to have been the case. Donaldson declared that the unscrupulous methods of his adversary had actually reduced him to the verge of ruin, and that on May 7, 1705, he had left off publishing the *Gazette* by himself. He seems to have transferred his rights to John Bissat, who was apparently a partner with him in the business. At the same time he took care that he would be able to recall the gift when circumstances proved more favourable, for "he gave no power to John Bissat, but a bare permission during pleasure." Boig, however, soon got into trouble himself, as shall be told in its proper place, and the Privy Council exercised a sovereign impartiality by suspending both the *Gazette* and the *Courant* on June 26, 1705, although Donaldson had no part

* The whole controversy can be read at length in the Maitland "Miscellany," II., 251-271.

in Boig's offence. This was hard treatment, and the Council seemed soon to realise this, for, while not interfering with the licence they had given to Boig, they removed the "stop" on the *Gazette* on July 24, 1705, and at the same time continued the embargo on the *Courant*.

Donaldson's difficulties, however, were by no means over, for he had to suspend publication before another year had passed. *

1699.—The History of the Works of the Learned: or an Impartial Account of Books lately printed in all parts of Europe. With a particular Relation of the State of Learning in each Country.

This literary periodical was started in London in January, 1699, being printed for H. Rhodes at the Star, near Fleet Street. It was 60 pp., small 4to, and said: "We shall be very sparing of our censures. . . . It is our design to keep a medium betwixt tedious extracts and superficial catalogues made up out of Title and Preface." The journal penetrated to Scotland, and in April, 1699, a reprint was undertaken by James Watson of Edinburgh. He used the same extended title, and in his first issue explained his position:—

* See p. 223—*Edinburgh Gazette*, 1706.

“The undertakers of Reprinting this *History* here think (the price being easy) it may be of singular use. After the publishing of it in London, they have a copy sent by the next post, and will be published in eight days after it comes to their hand: which will be long before the Booksellers can have their London copies sent down to them: and besides, the price is a third part less than what they are bought for at London, and not half of what those London copies are sold for here.”

The imprint ran, “Edinburgh: printed by James Watson, and sold by John Vallange at his shop a little above the Cross. 1699. Price 7 Pence.” The April number was 56 pp., small 4to, the same size as the London issue. Watson printed at least eight monthly issues, the last known being that for November, 1699. It is probable that no further reprints were made. The copy of the *History* in the Advocates’ Library substitutes these eight numbers for the English original, and after November, 1699, reverts to the London issue, which continued till 1711 at least.

The *History* is interesting to Scotsmen because of the connection with it of George Ridpath, that valiant champion of Presbyterianism. It would appear* that John Dunton, the well known London bookseller, projected “for the promotion of learning . . . a monthly journal of books

* John Dunton’s “Life and Errors” [1818], pp. 180, 198-9.

printed in London and beyond the sea," which he named at first *A Supplement to the Athenian Mercury*, a newspaper he was running, and afterwards *The Complete Library: News for the Ingenious*. He says the whole design lasted for about ten months, but his figure is hardly accurate, for copies of the *Complete Library* are extant from May, 1692, to April, 1694. Its career, however, was cut short by a certain Monsieur I. de la Crose, who had started a rival publication on the same lines, and with the title of *The Works of the Learned*. Dunton accommodated himself to the new situation by dropping his review and "joining with Lecrose's bookseller," the new venture being called by the extended title above. But "Lecrose dying it was discontinued though the same design under the same title is yet [1705] on foot and managed by several hands one of which is the ingenious Mr. Ridpath." Dunton's admiration for Ridpath was great. "He scorns," he tells us, "to receive a farthing of 'copy-money' till he knows what numbers are sold off. He was very fortunate in engaging in the *History of the Works of the Learned*, which was originally my own thoughts."

Another periodical with the same name, but having no connection with the above journal, was begun in London in Jan., 1737, through the combination of two kindred publications, the *Present*

State of the Republic of Letters and the Literary Magazine. It lasted till December, 1743, at least.

1705.—**The Edinburgh Courant.*** Published by Authority. No. 1. From Wednesday 14 to Monday 19 February, 1705. Single sheet folio, two columns. Edinburgh: printed by James Watson, in Craig's Close, and sold at the Exchange Coffee House, 1705.

In spite of the fact that Donaldson held authority to print a newspaper in Edinburgh, which expressly forbade, under penalty, anyone "penning or publishing the like," Adam Boig petitioned the Privy Council early in 1705 for permission to start a journal. He wished to produce it three times a week—Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Besides printing the usual home and foreign news, he specially aimed at giving shipping intelligence, in the hope that this "will prove a great advantage to merchants," and because that branch was "now altogether neglected."

* There have been at least three reprints of No. 1. One was issued with the paper in 1850, and was accompanied by an article. The whole was subsequently sent out in pamphlet form with considerable additions. Another bears that it was printed by J. Lithgow & Son, 34 Ann St., Glasgow. See also Head's "Reprints of Newspapers, &c." 2nd Series. Glasgow: D. Swan.

His crave was granted on February 13, 1705, the necessary "Act" saying that—

"the said lords doe heirby allow and grant warrand to the petitioner to sett furth and print ane paper entituled *Edinburgh Currant*, containing the remarkable forreign newes from the ports within the Kingdom, when ships comes and goes and from whence: he always being answerable for the samen, and for the newes therein specified and sett down."

Within a week his first number was published. To gather information he had procured correspondents from among the Custom house officers at the various ports, except in Aberdeen, where a coffee house keeper did the service.

The only notice of the start in the journal itself was in the note which appeared in its last column:—"The author hereof having upon the 13 instant got an Act of Her Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council to print and publish the Foreign and Home news thrise weekly, viz., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, the same will be continued from this day forward. *Nota.* Advertisements may be put in this Courant and for that end attendance will be given from ten aclock in the Forenoon till twelve and from two in the Afternoon till twelve at the Exchange Coffee House in Edinburgh."

As already stated, Capt. Donaldson of the

Gazette at once complained against the infringement of his monopoly, but as no action was taken, Boig continued to force the sale of his journal. He practically succeeded in driving his rival off the field.

But disaster awaited the *Courant*. The law of copyright between England and Scotland permitted some peculiarities of procedure, but in 1705 the patriotic indignation of the Scottish printers, and more especially of the Scottish Manufactory Paper Mills Company, was aroused by the claim of an English confrère, which appeared at the end of the English book, Hodges' "War betwixt the British Kingdoms Considered," to the effect that Scottish printers were, as Scotsmen interpreted the words, in "dependence on those of England, and could not reprint any book without their license or permission."* To prove the

* The exact words of the "Advertisement," which was printed on the last page of the book, were—"Whereas a second edition of the Author's first treatise on 'The Rights and Interests of the Two British Monarchies with respect to an United or Separate State' was printed at Edinburgh without his consent or asking his leave. This is to advertise the Printers of Scotland That if any shall reprint this or any other His Treatises without his consent, he will pursue them for Damages before the secret Council as Usurpers upon his Property and Discouragers of his Endeavours for the Public Good and Service of the Nation." p. 165.

absurdity of this claim, the printing of that very volume was set about, but the direct veto of the Scottish Privy Council put an end to the scheme. Evander MacIver, the company's agent, however, was not to be easily cowed, and he determined to fight the matter before the Council itself. As a preliminary, he sent an advertisement to the *Courant* to the effect that the decision of the Council had been come to *parte inaudita*, and that he intended petitioning the Council to reduce their own Act. The advertisement was inserted in the issues of the *Courant* for June 22 and 25. The Council met on June 26, and, treating the matter as *lèse majesté*, promptly stopped the publication of the offending journal.* The editor speedily acknowledged what he called his "crime," and confessed that his journal had been "most justly stopt on account of a most impertinent advertisement." The Council, however, was not disposed to treat the case leniently, and it was not till October 2 that the order for suspension was removed. Boig then subscribed a somewhat humiliating undertaking—"That I shall publish nothing in my *Courant* concerning the Government till first the same be revised by the clerks of Her Majesty's Privy Council." His reopening number was dated "From Monday, the 25th of

* See Maitland "Miscellany," II., 245-250.

June, to Monday, the 8th of October, 1705," and he started with a very short summary of news for that period. The imprint was, "Edinburgh: printed by the Heirs and Successors of Andrew Anderson, Printer to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, City, and Colledge, 1705."

The file of the *Courant* has not been available between September 25, 1706, and the corresponding date of next year. By the latter time, No. 324, the imprint had become—"Edinburgh: printed by John Reid, Junior, at Liberton's Wynd." In No. 479 (Sept. 22-24, 1708) the imprint ran simply—"Printed for the Author," but at No. 605 the Reid imprint was resumed. During this time several "postscripts" were issued. The copy of No. 685, in the Advocates' Library, contains the announcement, added by the subscriber who owned the copy, "This day the Courantier dyed," the date being Friday, Jan. 27, 1710. Two of the immediate effects of Boig's death were that there was no issue on the following Monday, and that No. 686 appeared without the legend, "with authority." The paper continued, however, to be issued regularly on the old lines till No. 706—Friday, the 17th, to Monday, the 20th March, 1710—when the original *Courant* came to an end.*

* *Vide Scots Courant*, 1710, and Defoe's *Courant*, 1710.

1705.—**Observer**, or a Dialogue between a Countryman and a Landwart Schoolmaster concerning the Proceedings of the Parliament of England in relation to Scots affairs. No. 1, undated, 8 pp., 12mo. No. 2, April 6, 1705. Edinburgh, printed by John Reid, Younger, in the year 1705.

No. 1, curiously enough, did not appear till near the end of May, which explains its dateless condition when it actually did see the light. The first page was used as an extended title, the matter beginning on p. 2. After No. 1 the short title ends with the word "Schoolmaster." Several numbers had no imprint. The size varied between 4 and 8 pp.

As the title indicates, the contents take the form of a discussion between a countryman and a "dominie," as he is named. One or other of them is represented as having been in Edinburgh, and the conversation takes place at some village a few miles from the city. On the whole, the *Observer* is a Union pamphlet, although the speakers sometimes wander far from that subject. On p. 4 of No. 3 appears what may be termed the journal's prospectus—

"The author of this paper, intending to Exhibit some sheets containing a scheme of such an union between the two kingdoms as is consistent with the interests of both, together with some other improvements that may contri-

bute to the retrieving the Honour Wealth and Power of this Nation : from several Topicks not hitherto insisted on by any author : intends to publish the same by way of dialogue, in sheets or half sheets once or twice a week, supposing this method will be most defusive and diverting and best adapted to vulgar capacity. "Tis hoped none will take offence at any expression which simply considered may seem disagreeable, seeing in controversies managed by way of dialogue, one of the parties is commonly brought in advancing absurdities or heterodox tenets that the oponent may have occasion to detect the falacy thereof and refute it, as is commonly practised in controversies about religion."

This programme was hardly adhered to, the dates of No. 3 and onward being April 17, April 26, May 2, May 16, June 11, June 27, July 23. The author explained the three weeks' pause after May 16 as arising from the holiday season. "The author perceiving that most of the people are out of Town into whose hands he would have come, resolves to proceed to the most material things as soon as the vacance is over, and in the meantime hopes the examination of some of the present papers may not be unacceptable." That he did not succeed in pleasing his constituents is apparent from the fact that he ended his paper with No. 9, July 23, 1705, although he still inserted the notice—"This is to be continued twice a week. Advertisements are taken in at the Caledonian Coffee House."

Strangely enough, a No. 10 was published nearly a year afterwards—on May 25, 1706. The interlocutors resumed the conversation with “Good morrow to you, Dominie, I think we shall wear out of acquaintance; it is long long since you and I had an hour’s discourse together.” The new number was better printed than its predecessors, and consisted of 8 pp. There was no imprint. The *Observer* apparently finally expired with it.

1706.—The Paris Gazette. Published in English by authority. Edinburgh, printed by James Watson, and sold at Mr. Freebairn’s shop in the Parliament Close, 4 pp., folio, price Two-pence: 2 closely printed columns to the page. The first number was undated. No. 2 is dated “from Tuesday 12 to Friday 15 February, 1706.”

The following advertisement appears in No. 2—

“All noblemen and gentlemen, who desire that this newspaper may be transmitted to them, let them please to send their direction to Mr. Freebairn’s shop in the Parliament Closs who will forward them carefully to them twice every week as occasion shall offer and the mails come on, they obliging themselves to pay to him Twelve pound Scots by the year, the one half thereof to be paid at Lambmass next and the other at Candlemass thereafter: They being likewise obliged to be at the charge of postage or carriage while in the country and when in

Edinburgh they shall have them delivered at their lodgings before they shall be published in the street."

The *Paris Gazette* was made up of two parts—*The Paris Gazette* and the *Haerlem Courant*. Both sections are apparently translations of the continental newspapers of the names given, and are quite distinct from each other. In No. 2 each section is headed separately, and the date is repeated. In No. 1 the *Paris Gazette* occupies 2½ pp., the remainder being given to the *Courant*. The contents are reports of current events. The *Paris Gazette* was regularly reproduced in the *Edinburgh Gazette* of the same year. The British Museum possesses two issues only.

The names, Watson and Freebairn, recall the fact that they, with another, obtained the post of Royal Printers for Scotland, in October, 1711, on the expiry of the licence of Mrs. Anderson. When the Rebellion of 1715 broke out, Freebairn, who was the son of a bishop, joined the Pretender at Perth, and became his printer. Mrs. Anderson, in consort with a man named Baskett, applied for and received the patent which he had thus forfeited. But Freebairn took proceedings for its restoration, and through an extraordinary act of clemency, was reinstated. King George continued to employ him and his assignees till 1752.

1706.—The *Edinburgh Gazette*. Published

by Authority. No. 1 Friday, April, 25th, 1706.* 8 pp. sm. 4to. No imprint. Sometimes the issue ran to 4 pp. only, but the 4to size was maintained throughout the series so far as it is known to exist. This was the only series of the *Gazette* in quarto.

Whether Donaldson carried on his *Gazette* into 1706 or not has not been discovered, but on the above date he made a new start. His explanation is given thus—"The Writer hereof, not having got the *Gazette* carried on to his Mind for some time past, because of several Obstructions, unnecessary here to be mentioned; but now having overcome several difficulties, he makes no doubt of carrying it duely on for the future, and hence forward intends to make it of this Volume for the more Convenient binding to these who keep Colections, and to begin a number of new every Year." To meet the charge of publishing unverified news, he also states he intends to "subjoin apart by itself, an Abstract of all remarkable passages contained in the public Letters how slightly so ever the same may be grounded; but with a *Nota* THAT THE SAME WANTS CONFIRMATION,"—all which is needed "that the Reputation of the *Gazette* might not be impaired."

* It was ominous that a misprint should occur so soon. The fourth Friday of April, 1706, was the 26th.

In its new form, the paper was meant to appear twice a-week—on Monday and Thursday, although the regular day of publication was sometimes delayed or advanced twenty-four hours, and occasionally only one issue per week was sent out. On the whole, the printing was badly done, numerous typographical errors occurring. Home news was even in less evidence than formerly, although advertisements usually filled the last page of each issue. During the first fortnight of September, a change of printer seems to have taken place, a title in new type appearing, and the general get-up of the journal showing distinct degeneration. One issue only, No. 46, was published in the first week of October (Oct. 1-7). It was the worst printed of all, and is the last known issue of this series of the *Gazette*, if, indeed, it was not actually the last of all.*

1707.—The *Edinburgh Flying Post*, or an impartial account of all Foreign News contained in the Publick Letters, together with the Domestic Occurences. Numb. 1, Thursday, February 20th, 1707: 4 pp. folio, 2 columns to the page. "This paper is intended to be continued. Advertisements are to be taken in by Mr. Andrew Symson at the foot of the Horse Wynd, printer thereof."

* See p. 228—*Edinburgh Gazette*, 1707.

No. 2 was dated "Thursday Feb. 20th to Tuesday, Feb. 25, 1707," and consisted of two pages only.

Two and a half pages of the first issue were devoted to an account of events abroad, dated Paris. Then followed a list of the Scottish Members of Parliament returned to the first British Parliament, the rest of the paper being taken up with miscellaneous paragraphs of home and foreign news. No. 2 contained no Scottish or home news. No further issues are known.

It is possible that the *Edinburgh Courant Reviewed* may have taken the place, and been the continuation, of the *Flying Post*. The sub titles of each are practically identical and both had the same printer and publisher. If this be so, then Donaldson may have used these journals when the *Edinburgh Gazette* was under suspension.

1707.—The *Edinburgh Courant Reviewed*, together with fresh and impartial intelligence of all the Foreign News contained in the Publick Letters, with Domestic Occurences. This paper is intended to be continued. Advertisements are to be taken in by Mr. Andrew Symson at the foot of the Horse Wynd, printer thereof. No. 1, March 6, 1707, s. sh. folio, two cols. to the page.

This paper arose out of the quarrel that raged between James Donaldson and Adam Boig. The opening statement says:—

“It having been the endeavour of one who calls himself the author of the *Edinburgh Courant*, though in propriety of speech, the collector of Fragments of the *London Courant* and Dyers Letters ever since his encroachment to depreciat the *Gazette*, and by his profound policy to gain the paper-criers to his side, to take much pains to sell the said *Courant* and to do their utmost to hinder the publication of the *Gazette*, in so much that of late the same has been laid aside as a thing that cannot be profitably carried on.”

The assertion of the *Courant* against the *Gazette* was that its news was stale, and that it unduly favoured France by omitting what was unfavourable to that country. The answer of the *Edinburgh Courant Reviewed* seemed complete — “To come now to the design of the paper, I shall own that in the *Gazette* I could not abuse authority so far as to insert anything therein dubious, partial or trifling, and for that reason was obliged to pass by such passages in the newspapers which were not of moment to be published by authority, though probably more satisfying to the bulk of readers. Now, I resolve to take a little more liberty, and to give stories as they come, though still such as not well founded with some note or other that their authors may be only chargeable for the truth of them. Do not regard Mr. Boig’s boasting that he has better intelligence than I, for as this was not the reason I mentioned many idle stories in the *Gazette* such

as in the *Courant*, so you shall see that I want no intelligence that he has"—and so he proceeds with his news. The British Museum has only the first number. If the conjecture regarding the *Flying Post* of 1707 be correct, it is unlikely that many numbers of the *Edinburgh Courant Reviewed* were published. The *Edinburgh Gazette* resumed publication on March 25.

1707.—The *Edinburgh Gazette*. No. 1 Tuesday March 25th 1707. Published by Authority. Edinburgh: printed by John Reid at his Printing House in Bell's Wynd, 1707. S. sh. folio: 2 cols. to the page: in large type.

On March 6, 1707, Donaldson stated in *The Edinburgh Courant Reviewed* that he had been compelled to abandon publication of the *Gazette* "as a thing that cannot be profitably carried on" because of Boig's rivalry. On the above date, however, he made a fresh start, intending that his journal should appear twice a week, on Tuesday and Thursday, that is, on days when the *Courant* was not published. It was poorly printed, had a few local notes, and occasionally blossomed into 4 pp. From No. 50 much carelessness was shown in the numbering, and from No. 68 to the end the name was spelled *Gazettee*. Sometimes there was one weekly issue only.

This continued till No. 149 (wrongly numbered

No. 119)—from Tuesday, August the 31st, to 2nd, 1708, when the paper came out as *The Scots Postman or New Edinburgh Gazette*.

1708.—*The Scots Postman, or New Edinburgh Gazette*. Published by Authority. No 1. Tuesday, September the 7th, 1708. Single sheet folio. Edinburgh: printed by John Reid, in Bell's Wynd, 1708.

The *Postman* was the legitimate continuation of the *Edinburgh Gazette* of 1699, and thus introduced itself:—"Introduction.—This paper has been for a long time under discouragement, and though it was the first paper authorised by the Government in this Kingdom, yet the author, having been engaged in other business, and having no leisure to apply himself to this, has given opportunity to others to attempt giving you the public news. How well it is performed is left to every man's judgment to determine." The rival journalists aimed at are evidently those of the *Courant*. The promoter goes on to say that the paper had been put on a "new foot." This arrangement has evidently reference to an agreement which Donaldson, the owner of the right to publish the *Gazette*, had made with another, who was more than likely the Mr. David Fearn mentioned hereafter. When Donaldson "transferred his power upon certain conditions and for

a limited time," as he says, August 18, 1709, "the Assigny was pleased to add to the title that of *Scots Postman*." This places beyond doubt the relation between the *Gazette* and the *Postman*. It has been customary to speak of these two journals as having been amalgamated, and so on. Any complication that exists is due to the fact that Donaldson occasionally parted with his rights, and that the *Gazette* had sometimes an *alias*.

In view of the troubles of the past, the new conductors boldly promised that publication in the future would be more satisfactory. At first the *Postman* was issued twice a week—Tuesday and Saturday, but it soon became thrice weekly. No. 4 spoke of "unexpected encouragement from the public." Matter sometimes exceeded the space at disposal, and a "postscript" of a single folio page was occasionally issued. This postscript proved the existence of a friendly co-operation between the printer and John Moncur, of the "printing house at the foot of the Bull's Close." Moncur usually set up the postscript, and occasionally even the main journal. Sometimes the whole issue was 4 pp. folio.

For a few weeks everything went as merry as a marriage bell, and then the old mutations set in again. The printing of No. 16 passed to James Watson, whom Donaldson had to discard soon after the start of the *Gazette*. The imprint then

ran, "Edinburgh: printed by James Watson for the Undertaker, and are to be sold at his printing house, and Alexander Henderson's shop. 1708." At No. 36 Watson gave place to the "Heirs and Successors of Andrew Anderson, printer to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty," i.e., Mrs. Anderson. This arrangement continued for two numbers only, for the printing of No. 38 reverted to John Reid, junior.

Towards the end of March, 1709, Donaldson evidently became dissatisfied with the way the assignee was carrying out his bargain. As a result, No. 85 (Wednesday, March 30, to Saturday, April 2, 1709) and onward dropped the sub title, and the journal appeared simply as the *Scots Postman*. The words, "Published by Authority," disappeared at the same time. Donaldson had evidently withdrawn his sanction to the arrangement made, and the assignee was ready to defy him. No issue was sent out for Saturday, July 9, 1709, owing to "an accountably foolish thing," in announcing which the author promised that better type would in future be used. No. 127 had no imprint, and that of No. 128 and onwards ran, "Printed for the author, and are to be sold at Alexander Henderson's shop in the Upper End of the Luckenbooths."

By the middle of August, the friction between Donaldson and his assignee became acute. What

should have been No. 144 appeared as *The Edinburgh Gazette*,* and was dated Saturday, August 13, to Thursday, August 18, 1709. The assignee, however, was not to be outdone. He applied to the Town Council for the necessary licence to publish a newspaper, and the minutes of August 17, 1709, show that his petition was granted. The minute runs—

“The Council, upon a petition given in be Mr. David Fearn, Advocat, author of the print called the *Scots Postman*, doe authorise and appoint him to print the said *Scots Postman* with an postscript to it upon extraordinary occasions, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday in the week, and discharge any other printers or publishers of news to print or publish any news within the city, liberties, or priviledges thereof upon the said days, except the said Mr. David Fearn, but prejudice to the printing or publishing any other newspapers upon any other days of the week, Sabbath day excepted, and appointed the presents to be intimated to the said printers or publishers, that none may pretend ignorance.”

The first number of the *Scots Postman* under this licence was sent out on the following day. It was numbered No 144, was dated Tuesday, August 16, to Thursday, August 18, and had no imprint. Thereafter the two journals continued side by side. The imprint of No. 145 of the *Postman*

* *Vide* p. 238—*The Edinburgh Gazette*, 1709.

reverted to that of No. 128. No. 153 and onwards inserted the name of John Moncur as printer. No. 163 (October 4, 1709) appeared as *The Scots Postman, or, The Merchant Venturer and Traveller's Gazetteer*, and added, "Published by Authority." With No. 177 the printing suddenly became, and continued to be, most wretched. The imprint was changed to "Edinburgh: printed by John Reid, in Bell's Wynd, 1709," to which No. 185 added, "and sold by Alexander Henderson, at the Upper End of the Lucken-Booths, and the printer." This continued to No. 197 (wrongly numbered 186), dated Thursday, December 22, to Saturday, December 24, 1709, after which the journal was again set on a "new foot."*

1708.—*The Edinburgh Flying Post.* No. 1. Tuesday, the 5th of October, 1708. Single sheet folio, two columns to page. Edinburgh: printed by John Reid, in Bell's Wynd, 1708.

What connection, if any, this *Post* had with its namesake of 1707, it is impossible to say. Its title does not contain the long explanatory clause of the earlier journal, and neither printer nor the interval of publication is the same. The *Post* of 1708 appeared three times a week—Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. The first number con-

* *Vide* p. 239—*Scots Postman*, 1709.

tained no explanation as to its purpose or origin, and it continued to devote its space entirely to news similar to what appeared in contemporary journals. In its later issues the words "With the Matterial Forreign News" were printed below the title.

Considerable confusion arose in the numbering of the journal during the second half of 1710, when the paper was being issued on Wednesdays and Fridays. The number for July 19-21 appeared as No. 129, 100 short of what it should be; and the number for September 20-22 as No. 133—which number cannot be accounted for unless the issue had become weekly and the wrong numbering had continued. The printing was very poor, and this last number was on a smaller folio sheet: it would not be surprising if it was the last issue. The imprint remained the same all through. In November, Reid undertook the printing of the *New Edinburgh Gazette*, which in due time also became a *Post*—the *Evening Post*.

1709.—A Review of the State of the British Nation.—No. 1. March 25, 1709. Printed by the Heirs of A. Anderson.

Defoe began the issue of this famous periodical from Newgate Prison on Feb. 19, 1704, as a sheet of 8 sm. 4to pp. In 1707 he was in Scotland on business connected with the Union of the Parlia-

ments, and thereafter for some years appeared frequently in the Northern Kingdom. He must accordingly have edited his *Review* from Scotland for some time. In 1709, however, he took a new step, which he indicates in the Preface to Vol. 5 of the London issue: "The fifth volume having now run a full year two reasons oblige me to put an end to it, 1) The usual bulk of the Book requiring it, and 2) The request of some gentlemen in Scotland who have by their own voluntary subscription encouraged the reprinting of it at Edinburgh and being to begin it this quarter, have desired the volume and their subscription to go on together." Defoe then proceeds to congratulate himself on the success of his paper, and continues—"Nor has it been without its testimony abroad, since the application of the author in this volume especially to the real work of uniting the hearts of these two nations who have so lately joined hands has been received by our brethren of North Britain as so profitable, so honest and so needful a work, that they have desired the Reprinting of it at Edinburgh in order to its being seen throughout Scotland and have voluntarily subscribed a sufficient sum for the expence of it." The first issue of the new London volume bore the name printed above, and was of date Tuesday, April 5, 1709, which was a fortnight later than the first issue of the Edin-

burgh edition, and raises the question as to whether it was not the London edition that was really the reprint, and not the Edinburgh.

Unfortunately copies of the Edinburgh edition have not been available. We are not, however, left without information regarding it. No. 27, June 4, 1709, of the London issue, contains an advertisement which throws some light upon the method of publication. It runs :—"Whereas from the 25th of March this paper has been reprinted three times a week in Edinburgh and published in all the principal Towns and Cities of Scotland and that several people have been at the trouble and charge to send advertisements of sales, books, medicines, things lost &c. down to Edinburgh to be there inserted in the *Review*: These are to give notice that for saving the trouble, charges, and difficulties of that method," arrangements were to be made with a London printer who would undertake all responsibility for their due appearance in the Scottish edition. "Note: The counties of Northumberland and Westmoreland are also supplied with this paper from Scotland together with the towns of Belfast, Carrickfergus and the city of London-Derry in Ireland." Several numbers of the *Scots Postman* for August, 1710, contain an advertisement that subscribers should leave their addresses at "Mr. Anderson's shop."

Further light is thrown on the career of the

Review in Edinburgh from the story of the conflict that raged between Mrs. Anderson and the printers Watson and Freebairn over the succession to the printing monopoly which had been used by Mrs. Anderson, and which expired in 1711. Watson accused Mrs. Anderson of spreading sedition in that she had reprinted Defoe's journal for a whole year, an offence sufficiently heinous in the Queen's printer. Mrs. Anderson promptly acknowledged the charge and justified herself thus:—"The author of that paper having in the paper itself oftentimes declared himself ready to answer any charge brought against him and the paper being first printed in London without the Government shewing any dislike of it, she humbly suggests she was sufficiently authorised to reprint it seeing had not the Government a different opinion of that paper from what this advocate pretends, the author had not then and still continued to publish it in London and in the face of the Law : and not received the least trouble about it."* Part of the campaign against Mrs. Anderson was fought on the ground that the work she produced was exceedingly bad. Her answer to that charge in connection with the *Review*

* "A brief Reply to the Letter from Edinburgh relating to the case of Mrs. Anderson, Her Majesty's printer for Scotland." [1711?]

brings out this interesting fact. "It is known that the Author being that year in Edinburgh corrected every paper himself."

1709.—**The Edinburgh Gazette.** As noted above, the friction between Donaldson and the person to whom he had assigned the rights of publishing the *Gazette* for a limited period became acute in August, 1709. Donaldson appears to have objected to the paper being called the *Scots Postman*, and to have been further incensed at the dropping of the original title altogether. He accordingly resumed control of his monopoly, and sent out—

The Edinburgh Gazette. Published by Authority. No. 144. From Saturday, August 13, to Thursday, August 18, 1709. Printed for the Author, Anno Dom. 1709. Single sheet folio. The "author" states:—"It is not necessary to inform the public of the transactions between the author and his Assigny, or with what difficulty the author has recovered his own grant, it being sufficient to let the reader know that the author has at last with much struggling recovered his power, but could never till now re-assume his possession." Publication was promised on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Care was to be taken that news was to be as accurate as possible, but where doubt existed, the editor was to place "all

such relations as seem partial or ill founded in a postscript"—an arrangement which would have advantages even to-day! The printing of the paper was very bad. The imprint of No. 157 was simply "Edinburgh: printed for the author, 1709."

The file of this new start beyond No. 157 is not available, but it apparently resumed connection with the *Scots Postman* in December of the same year.*

1709.—The *Scots Postman*, or, the New *Edinburgh Gazette*: being an Account of the Public News, Foreign and Domestic. Published by Authority. No. 1, Tuesday, December 27, 1709. Single Sheet folio. Every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Edinburgh: printed by John Moneur for the Undertakers, and to be sold at his Printing House at the foot of the Bull Close, opposite to the Trone.

Thus did the *Edinburgh Gazette* of 1699 make another start. It began by saying that—"It has been a misfortune to this paper to change its authors and printers several times, and by several stops, hindrances, neglect of printers, and innumerable errors of the press, to be of late much discouraged, though the accounts have been, especially for the last year, more exact than formerly. These are now to give notice that it is

* *Vide Scots Postman*, 1709.

once more set upon a new and, we hope, a right foot, both as to management and intelligence." The journal was not, however, nearly out of stormy waters. No. 15 (January 28, 1710) substituted for the second part of the imprint the words, "and to be sold at Mr. John Johnston's House at the foot of Moubray's Close at the Netherbow." No. 43 gave 4 pp., as sometimes happened subsequently. The type of No. 50 and after was smaller, and at the same time the heading was embellished with two rough woodcuts. The printer was changed at No. 60: "Printed by John Reid, Junr., for the Undertakers, and are to be sold at his printing house in Liberton's Wynd"—the second half of which imprint was altered in No. 63 to "at Mrs. McKay's, in Patrick Stiel's Close, on the South side of the Street, and a little below the Cross."

These changes, however, were as nothing to the revolution which took place about the middle of November, 1710. It is not clear what had happened, but it is apparent that another of the cataclysmic disagreements had broken out among the personages responsible for the journal. No. 141 (Tuesday, November the 21st, to Thursday, November the 23rd, 1710) appeared as *The New Edinburgh Gazette*. The aberration, however, was only temporary. The real No. 141 was only delayed, and turned out two months late

under the old designation, and with the same printer, on Tuesday, January 23, 1711. The only difference was that the cuts no longer adorned the title. The following explanation of the matter was vouchsafed :—

“The author of this paper being induced by a certain person to enter in a contract for some space of time for my title, upon certain stipulations to be performed by either party. But the said contractor with me, having failed to perform his conditions, not only endeavouring by all methods possible to enhance my title and right, but to ingross to himself the whole sale and publishing of my paper by changing of the title and numbers thereof (how fair and ingenious that is I leave to the discretion of my generous reader to judge). However, having closed matters in some part with him by consent, I continue my paper with my own title and number as last enumerate.”

In No. 144 the cuts of the heading were resumed.

Under this name the journal continued till June 26, 1712. At least, John Reid, the printer, died at the beginning of August, 1712, and was buried in Greyfriars on the 12th of that month. This, however, was no reason for the discontinuance of the journal, for his widow carried on the business. It is possible that Reid had acquired a proprietary right in the *Postman*: it is certain that his widow spoke as if she were both editor and proprietor in 1715. No issues have come

under observation between June 26, 1712, and the resuscitation of the paper in 1714.*

1710.—The Tatler. Sir Richard Steele began the publication of his *Tatler*, which he described as “a paper which should observe upon the manners of the pleasurable as well as the busy part of mankind,” on April 12, 1709, and it ran for 271 numbers, or for nearly two years. Sometime about the beginning of Feb., 1710, James Watson began the reprinting of the *Tatler* in Edinburgh. He seems to have started with the issue of Steele’s No. 130, and numbered it No. 1. At least the only two issues that have been available point to this conclusion. The British Museum has No. 31, and it corresponds with Steele’s No. 160, dated from Saturday, 15th April, to Tuesday, 18th April, 1710:—

The Tatler, by Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq. No. 31. From Thursday, April 20, to Monday, April 24, 1710. Single sheet folio, two columns to page. Edinburgh: printed by James Watson, and sold at his shop next door to the Red Lyon, opposite to the Lucken Booths, where advertisements are taken in. The number contains the following notice:—“Those who design to make a collection of this paper and will subscribe to take them for a year, shall be duly furnished by the printer and

* See Vol. II.—*Edinburgh Gazette*, 1714.

their copies printed on fine paper, at the rate of 7s. sterling for a whole year's papers, one half of which is to be paid on subscribing and the other at the expiration of a year after their subscription. No more fine copies will be printed than what are subscribed for. Subscriptions will be taken at the printer's shop next door to the Red Lyon, opposite the Luckenbooths, Edinburgh." The general appearance of the sheet is very similar to the original which it reproduces, although of a slightly smaller folio. The Bodleian Library contains a copy of No. 100 of the Edinburgh reprint, corresponding to Steele's No. 229, which is dated Saturday, September 23, to Tuesday, September 26, 1710. The Edinburgh number carries the date from Thursday, September 28, to Monday, October 2, 1710. In the Edinburgh issues local advertisements are inserted. As in the original, three numbers were published weekly.

This serial form was not the only issue that took place in Edinburgh. No. 100 contains the announcement that—

"The Genuine Copies of the First and Second Volume of Mr. Bickerstaff's *Lucubrations* in a pocket volume on an Elzevir Letter are sold at Mrs. Ogston's shop in the Parliament Closs, and at James Watson's Shop, next door to the Red Lyon, opposite to the Luckenbooths.

Price 3 shillings each volume. *Nota.*—These copies by the author are known by a running title, thus

4 The Tatler No. 1.

But the spurious copy has only on the head of the page (4)."

From which it seems likely that Watson had some special arrangement with Steele or his representative for the production of the *Tatler* in Edinburgh, and that somebody else was taking advantage of the indefinite state of "Literary Property" to undercut him.

The London issue of the *Tatler* ended on January 2, 1711, and Watson's reprint must also have ceased then, for within less than a fortnight he was sending out a native *Tatler* of his own.

1710.—The *Edinburgh Courant*, with the freshest advices, Forreign and Domestick. Published by Authority. No. 1, Munday, March 20, 1710. Edinburgh: printed by John Moncur for the Undertakers, and to be sold at Mr. John Johnston's House, almost at the foot of Moubay's Close at the Netherbow. Single sheet folio, 2 cols. to page.

Boig, the projector of the first *Courant*, died January 27, 1710, and with him died the Privy Council's warrant to publish a paper of that name.

As already stated,* the right of granting license to forthcoming newspapers within the city was quietly assumed by Edinburgh Town Council after the Union of 1707. Boig was hardly cold before it was asked to use its prerogative. The result is apparent from the following extract minute:—

“Att Edinburgh, the first day of February, 1710.

“The same day the Councill authorised Mr. Daniel Defoe to print the *Edinburgh Currant* in place of the deceased Adam Bog, discharging hereby any other person to print News under the name of the *Edinburgh Currant*.”

Defoe was not swift, however, to act upon the authority given. Seven weeks were allowed to elapse before his first number appeared, and he seems to have placed no obstacle in the way of the ousted journal continuing during that time under the old name.† His haste before the Council was probably to forestall possible rivals; although why he should covet that particular name when so many were available, it is difficult to understand.

The enrolment of the name of the author of “Robinson Crusoe” among Edinburgh journalists is full of interest: “It would now be a useless speculation as to what motives induced Defoe at that time to undertake the publication, and doubt-

* Introduction, p. 92.

† See p. 219.

less the writing of, an Edinburgh newspaper: whether or not the kindness and affectionate respect he received from the Scotch, contrasted in his view with the ungrateful reward of all his toils in England, revived a former desire to remove his family and to spend the remainder of his days in Scotland." *

Only two numbers of this issue of the *Edinburgh Courant* are known to exist. Each contains about $2\frac{1}{2}$ columns of news from abroad, the remainder of the space ($1\frac{1}{2}$ columns) being occupied with advertisements. It is probable that no more were issued under Defoe's direction, as his immediate connection with the *Courant* could not have lasted many weeks. At the end of the same March, he was recalled to London. With his departure, the journal would likely cease publication.

It should be noted that the transition enabled two distinct *Edinburgh Courants* to appear on March 20, 1710.

1710.—The Scots Courant. No. 707. Monday, March 20, to Wednesday, March 22, 1710. Edinburgh: printed by John Reid, Junior, and are to be sold at his house in Liberton's Wynd, 1710. Single sheet folio, 2 cols. to page. Three times weekly.

The usual date assigned for the start of the

* William Lee's "Daniel Defoe," I., 176.

Scots Courant is September, 1705. The author of the "*Edinburgh Courant* Reprint," for example, following the lead of earlier historians of the journal, states that it was begun in that year, that it was published thrice a week, and that Boig's *Edinburgh Courant* was merged in it on March 20, 1710. Several facts throw discredit on this statement. No copies of a *Scots Courant* earlier than March 22, 1710, have ever been known to exist, while there is every reason to suppose that it is simply the continuation of the original *Edinburgh Courant*. The number of the first known issue runs consecutively with the last known number of the earlier journal. Its format and printer are the same. When Defoe acquired the right of publishing news under the title of the *Edinburgh Courant*, those who had been carrying on Boig's paper were evidently unwilling to abandon the enterprise. They met the difficulty by changing *Edinburgh* in their title to *Scots*—the least possible alteration they could make—and continued the publication of their journal without "with authority." The truth is, they were taken by surprise when Defoe sent out his first number. In spite of the fact that he had secured the name he had delayed using it, and the holders of it had evidently come to think that he had abandoned his intention. The result was that on Monday, March 20, 1710, *Edinburgh* was favoured

with two *Edinburgh Courants* from different publishers. Then Boig's successors realised that Defoe meant business: and their next number appealed to the public as the *Scots Courant*.

At No. 729 ("From Friday, May the 12th, to Monday the 15th, 1710") the imprint became:—"Edinburgh: printed by James Watson, and sold at his shop next door to the Red Lyon opposite to the Lucken Booths, and at the Exchange Coffee House." This same number contains a note which speaks of "James Muirhead, the author of this paper." This may have been the same person who came under the notice of the authorities in 1697. Writing to Carstairs, under date Edinburgh, June 18, 1697, Sir James Ogilvy said—"It is said that James Muirhead, who is an apothecary in this place, being accidentally at Dumfries, and having occasion to visit some friends in that country, some of the Jacobites there being at an alehouse, did force him to drink with them, and after the drinking of some private healths, did begin King James's and confusion to all his enemies; and he having refused to do it, some of the company did fall upon him and beat him. . . . The Chancellor and I have examined Mr. Muirhead but he does not tell the truth fully."* There seems to be no further record of the incident.

* Carstairs' "State Papers," p. 309.

The numbers between October 27, 1710, and March 25, 1715 (Nos. 800-1464), have not been available for examination. Within that time the paper had considerably changed its appearance. It had become a 12 pp. small 4to. The title ran—"The *Scots Courant*, containing the Occurrences both at home and abroad." The first page was similar to a title page, and the imprint at its foot was—"Edinburgh: printed for the author. Sold at the Exchange Coffee House, where advertisements are taken in. 1715. Price Three Halfpence." The only indication that Watson continued as printer is his monogram in the centre of the page. The editor evidently worked a coffee house on his own account, for, in No. 2119 (June 19, 1719), the paper was sold there. In No. 2193 (December 9, 1719—misnumbered 2112) it is described as being "Muirhead's Coffee House, up the stair, immediately below the entry to the Writer's Court."

In appearance the *Scots Courant* was neat and clean. Like its contemporaries it devoted most of its space to foreign news. The last number seen is No. 2251, dated Wednesday, April 20, to Friday, April 22, 1720. It is perhaps more than a coincidence that the first number of the *Caledonian Mercury* appeared in the following week.

1710.—The North Tatler. The earliest

reference to this periodical is contained in Chalmers' "Life of Ruddiman." On p. 121 he has—"In March, 1710, the *North Tatler* . . . was printed by John Reid for Samuel Colvil"; and he adds in a footnote—"The *Tatler*, No. 1, was dated from 27th of March to the 1st of April, 1710, and was published every Monday and Friday." In his MS. Collections he gives the size as folio.

The use of the name by Richard Steele had given it currency, and many periodicals about the time adopted the word in their titles. From the particulars Chalmers gives, it is evident that the *North Tatler* was distinct both from Watson's reprint and from the *Tatler* of 1711.

1710.—The Examiner, or Remarks upon Papers and Occurrences. No. 1, Saturday, September 2, 1710, 2 pp., single sheet folio. To be continued weekly. Edinburgh, printed by James Watson, and sold at his shop, next door to the Red Lyon, opposite to the Luckenbooths.

The *Examiner* opens with the words—

"That my fellow-writers may not be alarmed at the sight of a new paper, I promise beforehand not to encroach upon any of their provinces: I shall leave the African Company and the coals to the *Review*; I will not touch one drop of the *Observer's* October; he and his countryman shall bowze it all up the next elections: All descriptions of stage players and statesmen, the erecting of greenhouses, the forming of constellations,

the beaus' red heels and the furbelows of the ladies shall remain entire to the use and benefit of their first proprietor.

My design is of another nature. I meet with a great variety of papers, neither so correct, so moral, nor so loyal as they ought to be: I see the town every day imposed upon by false wit, false learning, false politics, and false divinity. These sort of writings, though they are in contempt among the few that judge well, yet have their influence upon the generality of readers: and many of them are adapted by the cunning men who contrive them to the capacities of the weak who are misled by them. Some of these papers I intend to examine and set people right in their opinions. My chief business will be to instruct my countrymen and perhaps I may endeavour now and then to divert them."

The first number is altogether taken up with the examination of a certain *Letter*, and the second with "The French King's Thanks of the Tories of Great Britain considered."

Although this first number gave no indication of the fact, it was nevertheless an exact reprint of the similarly named paper which began its career on Thursday, August 3, 1710, and was published by John Morphew, near Stationers' Hall, London. The *Examiner* was started in support of the Government by Lord Bolingbroke, who had the help of Bishop Atterbury, Prior and others in the enterprise. It was opposed by the *Whig Examiner*, conducted by Addison. Its course was not

very promising until it was taken in hand by Swift with the number for November 2, 1710. "His *Examiners*," says Sir Leslie Stephen, "achieved an immediate and unprecedented success." He wrote the next 32 numbers when he relinquished the project to Mrs. Manley, who in turn was succeeded by W. Oldisworth. The periodical continued till July, 26, 1714.

The place of origin of the paper was no doubt well known to its Edinburgh subscribers, but Watson thought it necessary to indicate the fact in No. 20—from Tuesday, December 19, to Saturday, December 23, 1710—when the imprint became "Edinburgh: reprinted by James Watson, and sold at his shop opposite the Luckenbooths." No. 31, Vol. II. (from Thursday, June 26, to Thursday July 3, 1712), has a shorter notice: "Reprinted at Edinburgh, 1712." How long the Edinburgh reprint continued has not been ascertained. An ill-informed article in *Chambers' Journal** says it continued "until the year 1715, when it was stopped."

1710.—**The New Edinburgh Gazette.** Being an account of the Public News, Forreign and Domestick. Published by Authority. No. 141. Tuesday, November the 21st, to Thursday, November the 23rd, 1710. Single sheet folio.

* June 7, 1834.

Printed by John Reid, Junr. for the Undertakers, and are to be sold at his printing house in Liberton's Wynd.

No. 142 appeared as No. 2, and gave the following explanation:—"These are to give notice that this paper, having been now for two numbers published by the name or title of the *Edinburgh Gazette*, is notwithstanding written and published by the same undertakers who published the *Scots Postman* before." The notice then goes on to complain that original news letters intended for the paper had been intercepted by "some evil designing persons," and that consequently the conductors had had to fall back upon the custom of copying from prints—a custom which "the said *Postman* had promised to avoid."

Under this title the paper proceeded for at least six issues, but there is every reason to suppose that about the close of the year it changed its name to *The Evening Post or The New Edinburgh Gazette*, being an account of the Public News, Foreign and Domestic. The Advocates' Library has Nos. 225 and 226, the former being dated "From Tuesday, May 13, to Thursday, May 15, 1712." S. sh. folio. "Edinburgh: printed by John Moncur, and sold at his Printing House at the foot of the Bull Close, fore against the Trone, and by John Park at his stand at the Fountain Well, where advertisements are taken in, 1712." At the

rate of three issues weekly, the date of the start of the *Evening Post* coincides with that of the *New Edinburgh Gazette*. At the Maidment Sale the "Edinburgh Evening Post Newspaper, 1710 to 1712," was disposed of in one volume.*

1711.—The Tatler. By Donald MacStaff of the North. No. 1, Wednesday, January 13, 1711. S. sh. folio., twice a week. Edinburgh: printed by James Watson, and sold at his shop, next door to the Red Lyon, opposite to the Luckenbooths. Each number was headed with a motto, usually in Latin. No. 17 was "by Mary MacStaff, sister to Donald MacStaff of the North."

No. 4 had this notice—"Mr. MacStaff's lucubrations are always for the future to be printed on fine paper and with a new type. They are to be sold at a Penny a piece, and are to be had only at Mr. Watson's shop, next door to the Red Lyon. But such as design to make a collection by subscription may have them done on very fine paper at 10s. a year: one half at subscribing and the other at the expiration of the year." Publication days were Wednesday and Saturday, and thirty numbers altogether were issued. In No. 10 it is said that "the Design of this paper is to ridicule Folly and Affectation, and not to expose

* Catalogue I., 81.

Misfortunes and Imperfections which are natural and unavoidable.”

Steele's *Tatler* ceased publication with the number for January 2, 1711, and it is therefore probable that the Edinburgh *Tatler* was designed before the news of that event reached the city. The English paper, however, had made its appeal successfully to the Edinburgh public, and it therefore entered into the head of an enterprising young advocate to have a journal of the same kind which might be native to Edinburgh. This was Robert Hepburn of Bearford, at that time about twenty-one years of age, and just returned from studying law in Holland. He was a man whom the erudite Lord Hailes spoke of as being *ingenii præcociis et præfervidi*. He no doubt pleased himself and his publisher by following the example of Steele in his new paper, for he roundly declared that he intended to take the English writer as his model. “The author,” he says, “in imitation of Mr. Bickerstaff, whose steps he proposes to follow, is resolved to observe some order in the subjects of these papers.” Tytler, while not exactly accurate in his description of the little publication, has these notes on it:—“These papers are evidently the production of a man of vigorous native powers, and of a mind not meanly stored with ancient learning, and familiar with the best writings of the moderns. The author

might have shone in the treatment of general topics of moral discussion or of criticism; but, from a propensity not unnatural, where talents are combined with an ardent temperament and sarcastic turn of mind, his compositions were fitted to give much offence by the description of known characters, and by the personal satire which he employed, with no gentle or delicate hand, on some men of note, both in the ecclesiastical and civil departments, among his countrymen.”*

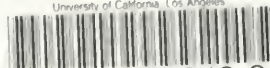
In the course of the paper, the editor was called repeatedly the “Censor of Great Britain.” Occasionally the whole issue was devoted to one topic, as when, in No. 4, the entire space was occupied with a dissertation on the relations of children to parents. Once the editor says, “I have lately received private intimations that there are such things as swords and pistols to be feared if I continue to be as particular as I have been hitherto.” On the whole there was an air of light persiflage about the venture. “Any impartial peruser of these papers will easily perceive that the true scope and intent of ’em is to convince people of these follies that are apt to render ’em ridiculous, and which they may help and amend if they please.” It is, however, sometimes difficult to believe in his sincerity.

* Tytler’s “Life of Lord Kames” (1814), I. 228.



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